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CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

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POPULAR HISTORY
OF THE
LIFE OF COLUMBUS

A COMPLETE, COMPENDIOUS NARRATIVE OF HIS VOYAGES, DISCOVERIES,
AND GENERAL CAREER, COLLECTED FROM ALL AUTHENTIC SOURCES,
MAKING A DIGEST OF ALL THE FACTS OBTAINABLE FROM
EXTANT HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, BIOGRAPHICAL, AND
OTHER PUBLICATIONS ON THE SUBJECT.

BY
J. H. LANGILLE,

PROFESSOR OF NATURAL SCIENCES AND AUTHOR OF "OUR BIRDS IN THEIR HAUNTS," &c., &c.

AND

MARY F. FOSTER,

OFFICIAL TRANSLATOR TO THE PAN-AMERICAN CONFERENCE.

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JOINT PREFACE.

THE task of writing a life of Columbus has been discharged with most signal ability, and by the most competent authors that could possibly be found. Each narrative in succession, from the first, seems to be enough—all that could be said or done to cover the ground at the time. Yet it has proved to be a fact that from Columbus's son, who may be said to have written the first biography of his father, each succeeding contribution from Las Casas, Bernaldez, Peter Martyr, Oviedo, Herrera, and Irving's most enchanting work, down to that replica of Irving, Tarducci, offered acceptable and indispensable material and information for this interesting work. Could it be presumed for a moment that Humboldt was not needed? Or that De Lorgues and his school of canonizers have not made fresh and suggestive investigation? And whilst this fullness of raising St. Christopher to the skies seems to leave no room unoccupied in the exaltation of Columbus, who will confront the Brazilian Varnhagen and say that he has not been needed? In point of fact, his incisive, exact, and exhaustive work, searching from Peru to Seville, from Berlin and Vienna to New York and the West Indies, has turned out very valuable solutions of the mysteries of Columbian literature.

Without cataloguing so many other welcome popular abridgments, compendiums, and essayists like Prescott, Sir Arthur Helps, Adams, Hubert Bancroft, R. H. Major, could we close the list without naming as amongst the foremost Henry Harrisse? His notes on Columbus seem to cover every inch of land and sea, sifting the notarial and other public records; in fact, marking out a geodetic biographical survey, so to say, of Venice and Genoa,

Spain and the Indies, England and America. He thus begins the parenthesis of his work, which is not concluded until he follows down with other volumes, as to the Discovery, the Cabots, and the other "Chief Pilots," giving the remotest bibliographical items of the catalogues and of the public and private libraries. He shows the scope of an exhaustive research, upon which is founded an entirely new school of historical criticism on the subject. When we name Justin Winsor and pair him with John Fiske in the opening of this new school of Columbian literature, how earnestly could we wish that they had been at the beginning instead of at the close of the list of biographers of the heroic Discoverer.

Columbus's little fleet of caravels represent the "maritime list" of his time. In our day, the three models of them sent from Spain, rolling through the surf between the great ocean war-ships, tell a most striking story by their contrast. The new departure in navigation was really the chief thing discovered. Passing at once from the ancient world of the galleys to the broad waters of ocean navigation was a turning point in human history. It marked forever the boundary of the ancient and beginning of the modern sea-going systems. Never losing sight of the land, anchoring for the night, rowing the bireme and trireme—the galleys with two or with three benches of oars, contracted the boundary—the narrow limits of ancient navigation and commerce preceding Columbus. It shows in the visible fable and contrast of the picture the Old World navigation compared with the new era of the ocean-going ships—the stride from the caravel to the clipper and the ocean war-ship, steam-fitted and steel-clad. The daring that pierced the "Sea of Darkness" and established the new system of ocean navigation was the great "Discovery"—the original achievement of Columbus. How bold the deed! How vast the result!—A new destiny for mankind.

In this history we are constrained to divide the unexampled narrative of events in his time from the still more extraordinary consequences which have followed. The Italian sea captain ranking, and in fact living the career of the class—the “*Colonii*” of Roman history—steps from the presence of the Spanish throne into the first truly scientific ocean voyage, from which he returns with a conquest which the agrarian laws of Rome would measure correctly as one-half the world, to be distributed among the landless cohorts of the Holy Roman Empire of Charles the Fifth.

In our present biographical compendium of facts we have avoided sectarian or partisan aims, keeping in view the wide popular audiences we have to reach and the useful mission of this work which we hope for it in places of public education, and by the general diffusion of its contents and their transfer from the inaccessible and costly sources from which we have gleaned our story. From the narrative of Don Fernando, the son of the Discoverer, down to the recent oratorical and beautiful work of the great Spanish statesman, Castelar, we have left no omissions in our gleaning search. In view of this necessity, the extent of our obligation to other authors is too extensive to be even enumerated, and it is not a want of sense of this which precludes our acknowledgments. As there has been really no previous popular volume at an accessible price, with this aim practicable for the general school and college library, for the family circle and the Christmas fireside story, we hope the good end we have sought to subserve will pardon what may appear to be the liberties we have taken in our extracts from so many of the best works—historical, critical, and biographical—bearing on our subject, and with this statement and its peculiar aims made plain, we hope that an additional life of Columbus will prove acceptable.

J. H. LANGILLE.

MARY F. FOSTER.

THE PORTRAIT.

THE interesting subject of a portrait of Columbus has undergone a varied discussion since it was alluded to in our text.

The outcome generally accepted concedes a positive preference for the unique picture which is the property of Mr. Gunther, of Chicago. Our conclusion, we confess, is influenced in favor of this portrait by the fact that it was also the frontispiece in Irving's fifth edition, published in London. It was painted for the Queen, in court dress, and presents the Admiral at the height of his glory. Its authenticity is now tacitly conceded.

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INTRODUCTION.



IN the present age Christopher Columbus has been depicted both as a pirate of the high seas and as an immaculate saint, the opinions of authors generally being graduated at all points between these two extremes. In view of this diversity of estimate, we propose to do as little as possible in the way of interpreting so distinguished a character. We prefer to give the facts of his life as recorded by those who knew him personally, supplemented by his own writings, along with a fair presentation of the sentiments and practices of the age in which he lived. Thus we shall leave the reader to judge for himself when the Admiral was good and when he was bad.

A biography like this can be made intelligible only by first giving an outlook into the bibliographical field presenting such a variety of opinions. We will therefore give a brief summary of the principal writers on this distinguished adventurer, and on the enterprising period which he rendered so illustrious. As Harris has well said, "Columbus was very far from being in his lifetime the important personage he now is; and his writings, which then commanded neither respect nor attention, were probably thrown into the waste-basket as soon as received." After the first sensation caused by the announcement of his discovery, both he and the country which he had made known fell into disrepute; and when he died in the care of the good Franciscan

monks at Valladolid, the records simply noted "the said Admiral is dead;" and the world made so little account of the event that, in the two years following, editors who were revising and publishing narratives of his voyages did not know that he was no longer living.

It was not till ten years after his death that his first biographical sketch appeared, and that in the most incidental manner. Giustiniani, an Italian bishop, publishing a polyglot psalter at Genoa, garnished the margin of the nineteenth psalm with a brief outline of Columbus's career, which has served to immortalize the said bishop's production. Whether he was guilty or not of the "*thirteen lies*" which Fernando Columbus so indignantly laid to his charge, he must have had a high regard for the subject of his narrative; for he looked upon the Admiral's achievements as a striking fulfilment of the prophecies of that psalm, and closed his account by saying, "Such was the end of that most celebrated man, who, had he lived in the times of the Greek heroes, would certainly have been placed among the gods."

Columbus left a school of able and well-trained navigators to follow up the immense work he had so nobly begun. If the grandeur of his first discovery, which drew tears from the eyes of learned men, had soon passed away, like the wake of his little caravels in the storm, other keels were plowing the unknown seas, and before the men who knew him well had passed away, the vast extent and incalculable resources of the New World began to appear. Then, as Humboldt has fitly noticed, all departments of literature received a new and immense impulse. Historians were ready to record the

wonders of the Indies, the glory of the Spanish sovereigns who had patronized their discovery, and the voyages of the Admiral who had given his life to the development and realization of the new idea.

Peter Martyr, an Italian, who had been attracted to the Spanish court in the service of education and literature, not only referred to Columbus in his numerous letters to distinguished men—eight hundred of which are preserved—but set his facile pen to work to write a regular history of the Indies, in which Columbus was allowed an ample space. His work, now known as “Decades of the Ocean,” was translated into English by Richard Eden, in 1555, and may be found in some of our largest libraries.

Andres Bernoldez, curate of Palacios, who had entertained Columbus for months, as his guest, on his return from his second voyage, has given us the result of their fireside chats in his history of Ferdinand and Isabella. This work is one of the best authorities on that second voyage. The part pertaining to Columbus was translated into English by George Ticknor, Esq., and published in the Massachusetts Historical Society, vol. 8, pp. 5-68.

Oviedo, who had been associated with Columbus's sons, as page to Prince Juan, wrote a General History of the Indies, in which he gave the most respectful attention to the Admiral. He does not seem to have made the most thorough use of the documentary resources then available, but his conclusions are well made. Nor does he seem to have been biased by an undue admiration for his hero.

The venerable Las Casas, missionary to the Indies,

and finally made bishop, also wrote a history of that New World, including a biography of Columbus, which is considered indispensable to the critical student of history. His father and uncle both sailed with the Admiral on his second voyage, and he himself accompanied him on his last and most trying voyage to Central America. Having received from his father an Indian slave as a servant, while he was a student at the University of Salamanca, and having been obliged to give him up when Isabella returned certain of the enslaved Indians to their native homes, his humane heart was opened to their unparalleled sufferings, and he became the champion of their cause to the end of his long and useful life.

His great work on the Indies was too honestly written, and gave too full an account of the rascalities of the Spaniards in the New World, to admit of its publication in Spain till 1875; but in manuscript it had long been a most important work of reference, and as such was made a main reliance by Washington Irving. We are indebted to this production for all we know of Columbus's Journal of his first voyage, Las Casas having made a full abstract of it. The Journal itself is now no longer known. An almost equally important authority is the work of this bishop, on the second and third voyages. He had access to many documents and letters which cannot now be found.

Not the least in importance is the biography of Columbus written by his son, Fernando, who professes to have recorded only what he knew personally of his father's career, and what he derived from his father's writings then before him. The authenticity of this

work has recently been challenged by the indefatigable HARRISSE; but he has not succeeded in shaking the faith of scholars in that vivid and interesting narrative, which has much internal evidence in its favor. As this son was but four years of age when the Admiral went on his first voyage, his personal knowledge covered only the latter part of his father's career. The critical student, therefore, will find him rather vague and uncertain as to that period. In admission of this he says: "The Admiral having gained some insight in sciences began to apply himself to the sea, and made some voyages to the east and west, of which and many other things of those his first days I have no perfect knowledge, because he died at such time as I, being confined by filial duty, had not the boldness to ask him to give an account of those things; or, to speak the truth, being but young, I was at that time far from being troubled with such thoughts." Fernando's biography may be read in English in many of our large libraries.

An indispensable work to the thorough study of Columbus is that complete collection of official documents of the transactions of the sovereigns of Spain in connection with his voyages, called the *Codex Diplomaticus*. It also can be read in English, under the title, "Memoirs of Columbus, by the Decurions of Genoa."

Many other works might be mentioned, but these are the most important.

Recent works, such as the extensive and, on the whole, excellent work of IRVING, have derived incalculable aid from the great documentary collections of MUÑOZ and NAVARRETE, which, we regret to say, are not available to English readers; though Major in his

Select Letters, and Harrisse in his Notes on Columbus, have given us not a few of the documents and letters in our own language.

In the earlier half of this century a querulous work, entitled "The So-Called Christopher Columbus," by Aaron Godrich, appeared as a notable curiosity in literature. Living men may hate each other very intensely; but how a man in his grave nearly four hundred years can be so spitefully hated and horribly caricatured by a recent inhabitant of this New World is inexplicable, to say the least.

As another extreme, this century has produced a school of writers, led by Count Roselly de Lorgues, of France, who can discern not so much as a fault or foible in this man, chosen of God and upheld by miracles, whom the Pope should recognize by saintly canonization. But the candid inquirer must admit that with all his greatness, and piety according to the religion of that period, the Admiral had his fair share of faults.

We have recently had some very scholarly works on Columbus and his age in this country. That by Justin Winsor is one of the most critical and exhaustive in its ransacking of resources which any country is likely to produce on any character; but it is not probable that unprejudiced readers will recognize such a very great flood of new light in the unfavorable view given by that author as to the moral character of the Admiral. And many parts of the narrative, in respect to the treatment received by the great discoverer from his adopted nation, and the unparalleled difficulties he encountered in his government of a new world, the humane reader will in-

terline with sentiments of compassion and charitable judgment.

Mr. John Fisk's "Discovery of America" contains an account of Columbus which every critical student should read. It is the result at once of the most thorough research and the most candid and generous judgment.

What was the personal appearance of Columbus? How is it that there is so little resemblance in his various portraits? Mr. William Elory Curtis, an acknowledged authority on this matter, says: "The most reliable authorities—and the subject has been under discussion for two centuries—agree that there is no tangible evidence to prove that the face of Columbus was ever painted or sketched or graven during his life. His portrait has been painted, like that of the Madonna and those of the saints, by many famous artists, each dependent upon verbal descriptions of his appearance by contemporaneous writers, and each conveying to the canvas his own conception of what the great seaman's face must have been; but it may not be said that any of the portraits are genuine, and it is believed that all of them are more or less fanciful."

We have, however, verbal descriptions of his physiognomy and personal appearance by five distinguished personages, who knew him intimately. His son, Fernando, says: "The Admiral was a well-made man, of a height above the medium, with a long face, and cheek-bones somewhat prominent; neither too fat nor too lean. He had an aquiline nose, light-colored eyes, and a ruddy complexion. In youth he had been fair, and his hair was of a light color, but after he was thirty years old it turned white. In eating and drinking he was an ex-

ample of sobriety, as well as simple and modest about his person."

Oviedo, a distinguished Spanish historian, who had seen Columbus at different times during his youth and early manhood, says: "Columbus was a man of honest parentage and sober life. He had a noble bearing, good looks, and a height above the medium, which was well carried. He had sharp eyes, and the other parts of his visage were well proportioned. His hair was a bright red, his complexion flushed and marked with freckles, His language was easy, prudent, showing a great genius, and he was gracious in manner."

Bernaldez, a devout ecclesiastic, curate of Palacios, and biographer of the king and queen, knew Columbus well, having entertained him as a guest for quite a time, just after his second voyage. He describes him as "a man of fine stature, strong of limb, with an elongated visage, fresh and ruddy of complexion, marked with freckles. He had a noble bearing, was dignified of speech, and bore a kindly manner."

Peter Martyr, a distinguished man in learning and literature at the court of Spain during the solicitations and voyages of Columbus, and Las Casas, the great missionary to the Indians and the humane advocate of their cause, both describe the Admiral in language very similar to the statements quoted. The latter tells us that his keen eyes were gray, that his countenance was sad, and that, while he spoke fervently and fluently, he was inclined to be reticent. Naturally of an impulsive temper, his anger rose quickly; but all his moods and operations of mind were tempered with a high sense of justice.

Of all the portraits claiming to represent Columbus, the Giovia group is best sustained by criticism. It is known that Paolo Giovio, archbishop of Nocera, whose wealth was sufficient to indulge his literary and artistic tastes, and who was a cotemporary of the Admiral, had a portrait of him in the magnificent art collection of his palace on the banks of Lake Como. Five paintings and one engraving,¹ all resembling each other quite perceptibly, lay claim to be the original Giovia portrait, and they all conform sufficiently to the descriptions above quoted. It would seem that either some one of them is the original from which all the rest have been derived, or the prototype from which they have been taken is lost.

Many other portraits lay claim to authority, representing the physiognomies of nearly all the nationalities of Western Europe. It is pretty certain that any portrait with a mustache, or beard, or a ruff about the neck is of doubtful likeness, and certainly those which conform most closely to the descriptions given by writers who knew him are most entitled to our confidence.

The Lotto portrait, just commanding a good deal of attention, is not altogether unlike the Giovia type, and has many points worthy of consideration; but it does not promise to take the place of that very interesting group.

Should Columbus be considered the rightful discoverer of America? Is the quadricentennial exhibition about to be held by the Republics of America, and, in fact, by the civilized world, *a grand reality*, or is it a

¹ See Mr. Curtis's very interesting article in the *Cosmopolitan*, January and February, 1892.

magnificent sham? A good deal has been written and said on this point during the last few years; but the fact that everything is moving harmoniously toward that Great Western City in which the World's Fair is to take place shows plainly enough that men in general are still holding to the old opinion. Columbus is looked upon to-day as the revealer of this half of the globe.

Not to speak of the claims put forth for the Egyptians, the Canaanites, and the Chinese as the original discoverers and colonizers of America, we will begin with those of the Norsemen. That these brave seamen made various voyages to the North Atlantic coast in the last part of the tenth and the first part of the eleventh century is now too clear to admit of a doubt; but can those voyages, which left no trace of colonization in the land itself, revealed nothing to the world, and added nothing to the convenience and commerce of the world,—can such voyages be properly called *a discovery?* The vague accounts found in the Sagas, of the lands discovered by chance by the Norsemen, supposed to refer to Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and the New England coast, will not soon take the place of the well-authenticated voyages of Columbus, conducted by a strictly scientific method, and obviously not originated by intelligence gained from Iceland.

Between this period and the date of the first voyage of Columbus, says R. H. Major, "the coast of America is reported to have been visited by the Arabians of the Spanish peninsula, the Welsh, the Venetians, the Portuguese, and also by a Pole in the service of Denmark." The vagaries of these claims we have not time to dis-

cuss in a work which is supposed to appeal to the common sense of the people rather than to hair-splitting speculations.

In view of all the different parties claiming to have seen, by the chance of overwhelming storms or otherwise, the shores of America before the landing of Columbus, perhaps we would better end the debate as to priority of discovery by concluding that the *aborigines* first found the Western Continent, and rest our claim in favor of Columbus in the fact that *he gave America to the world!*

Just here we are reminded forcibly of the words of Peter Martyr, who says: "The reverend and thankful antiquity was accustomed to esteem those men as gods by whose industry and magnanimity such lands and regions were discovered as were unknown to their predecessors. But unto us, having only one God, whom we honor in triplicity of person, this resteth, that albeit we do not worship that kind of men with divine honor, yet we do reverence them, and worthily marvel at their noble acts and enterprises."

CHAPTER I.

THE BIRTHPLACE AND EARLY LIFE OF COLUMBUS.



GENOA, more ancient than Rome, and one of the most charmingly located cities in the world, is the birthplace of Christopher Columbus. Though much disputed formerly, this is now made sure beyond a doubt. Henry Harrisse, who may be called the ultimate authority on such points, in the life of the Admiral, says :¹ "Columbus's father, Domenico, who, let it be said, lived long enough to hear of the great discovery accomplished by his son, since he died in 1494, called himself a Genoese in four deeds executed at Savona, February and June, 1473, August, 1484, and November, 1491. So did Columbus's youngest brother, Giacomo, in an instrument in writing, dated September, 1484. These documents, all quoted by Tiraboschi, are in the notarial archives of Genoa. Among his contemporaries, Giustiniani, Bernaldez, Gallo, Senarega, Cabot, Geraldinus, and the compilers of the *Pesi novamenti* and *Itinerarium*, all call him a Genoese."

Again, page 70, after discussing at length the claims for other places, he says : "To close this exciting debate we propose to quote Columbus himself, thinking that his opinion on the subject is entitled to some consideration. In the will or deed dated February, 1498, conferring sundry titles, *a majorat*, &c., upon his descendants, he says in so many words : 'I was born in Genoa ;'

¹ Notes on Columbus, p. 63.

and speaking of that city he adds: 'I came from there, and there was I born.'"

But to ascertain the *date* of Columbus's birth has been still more difficult. Bernaldez, the cura de los Palacios, who knew Columbus well, says in his quaint way:

"And this same Admiral Christopher Columbus, of a marvellously honored memory, a native of the province of Milan, the discoverer of the Indies, being in Valladolid, in the month of May, died in a good old age, being seventy years old or thereabouts. Our Lord pardon him. Amen."

Therefore, Irving, Humboldt, and others put his birth at 1435. Others, by an arrangement of inferences from some of Columbus's letters, making a supposed connection which is not very conclusive, have placed the date at 1455-'56. These two dates, about twenty years apart, are both at variance with certain well-authenticated statements in Columbus's letters.

An examination of the notarial records by the Marquis Stagliano, apart from all historical statements, would place the date of the birth of the great discoverer somewhere from October 29th, 1446, to October 29th, 1451. Henry Harrisse thinks it can be fixed between March 15th, 1446, and March 20th, 1447. And this date accords precisely with those quite definite statements in Columbus's letters which were so notably at variance with the dates above given. In his book of the first voyage (1492) he says: "I was upon the sea twenty-three years without being off it any time worth the speaking of." Again he says "that he took to the sea at fourteen years of age and ever after followed it." We know that he left Lisbon in 1484, and until 1492 was

soliciting aid for his voyage, and so was not on the sea during that time. Subtracting the sum of 23 and 14 from 1484, and allowing some months more or less at each end of the periods covered by these figures, we easily get the date of Harrisse, which includes that of Stagliano—namely, 1446-'47, or thereabout.

But we can make out still another line of confirmation of the above date. In 1501 he wrote to the Spanish sovereigns, "I went to sea very young and have continued it to this day." Now this term, very young, is, as we know, 14 years. He then says: "It is now forty years that I have been sailing to all those parts at present frequented." Here the word "sailing" is used more generally, and evidently includes the years he spent in Spain in the interests of his first voyage. Add then 40 and 14, and subtract the sum from 1501, and we are back again to 1447 by exact figures; and by allowing a few months at both ends of the periods given we might easily make it 1446.¹

Here, then, by three independent lines of calculation, we have the birth of Columbus at 1446-'47. And let it be noted that these lines, one by means of the notarial acts, and two from the internal evidence of the Admiral's own letters, are the most trustworthy possible. Also, as the language of Bernaldez, on which the earliest date has been founded, is not very definite, and as Columbus turned gray young, at thirty years of age, and must have been much broken by his life of extreme hardships and great anxiety, his age at sixty might easily have been mis-

¹ In the famous *Memoirs of Columbus* published by the Decurions of Genoa, the date of his birth is given as either 1446 or 1447.

taken for seventy; but the same sort of mistake could scarcely have covered the twenty years from fifty to seventy.¹

This date, as given above, accords with that given by Muñoz, whose careful research and noble candor entitle him to special credit.²

Genoa has many statues of distinguished personages and heroes, along the line of her great antiquity; but that which the traveller from every part of the world stops to gaze upon is the imposing figure of Columbus, elevated on its high and elaborate pedestal, in the public promenade, Piazza de Acqua, with the statue of America kneeling at his feet. Scarcely could this distinguished man of modern times have opened his eyes upon a more delightful landscape or a prouder city. But he does not seem to have cared particularly for the forest-clad slopes and rocky peaks of the Apennines, curving like an amphitheatre around Genoa, nor for the snowy peaks of the Alps beyond. He looked out upon the sea, whence came the ships from all parts of the known world; and the varied costumes and the jargon of many languages in the harbor were, to his boyhood curiosity, a revelation of the wide world beyond the walls and moles of his native city. He probably never saw the inside of one of the

¹ On some of the points above given see R. H. Major's *Select Letters of Columbus*, pp. 33 and 34 of Introduction.

After all, it must be admitted that these lines of evidence concerning the date of Columbus's birth, though highly probable, are not absolutely conclusive. If, for instance, the 40 years spent on the sea should not include the 7-8 years of sojourn in Spain, the date implied by Bernaldez, and adopted by Irving and Humboldt, would be sufficiently accurate.

² The figure 28, as representing the age of Columbus when he came to Spain, and which is found in one of his letters, is evidently a mistake.

many marble palaces which looked out so proudly on the harbor, nor could he have been very familiar with the great centres of commerce, representing in Genoa the arts and products of the civilized world. He was the son of a wool-carder¹—in fact, belonged to an ancestry of wool-carders; and he grew up amidst the incessant industries and careful economies of frugal life. We are not to associate his childhood, however, with a pinching poverty or the squalor of low life. His father, Domenico Columbo—Columbus is the latinized form of the name—probably began married life in his own house, in the wool-weavers' quarter in Genoa, having also a shop and an independent business on a moderate scale. Possibly he had a small cloth factory with a journeyman and an apprentice.

A careful examination of the notarial acts shows that he moved to Savona in 1470. Here he and his son Christopher were known as weavers; but the latter disappears from the notarial records after 1473. Domenico kept a house of entertainment and speculated in small landed properties. But fortune does not seem to have smiled on this combination of enterprises, for in after years he needed Christopher's aid, and at least one of his lots remained unpaid for at his death. During the fifteen years spent here he lost his wife, whose maiden name was Susannah Fontanarossa, and whom he married in the country lying east of Genoa, called Bisagno.

Such, as nearly as we can judge, was the youthful

¹ In the present state of manufacturing, wool-carding and wool-combing are very different processes. Whether the Columbuses were wool-carders or wool-combers, is very difficult to determine.

home and such were the circumstances of young Christopher, the oldest of four sons, of whom two, Bartholomew and James (Diego in Spanish), were intimately associated with his fortunes in the New World; the other, John Pelligrino, was of delicate health and died in early manhood. He had also one sister, named Bianchinetta, whose husband, Bavarillo, was a cheesemonger, or some say a butcher. They had one child.

Probably a little more light on the humble home of Domenico Columbo would disclose a family of no ordinary moral and intellectual status, for such a trio as the Columbus brothers known in the New World could not have sprung from an indifferent household. It has been customary to take a somewhat broad view of the ancestral line, showing a view of intellect and a bold heroism as a more or less common inheritance for several generations. A supposed relative of the same name, presumably a great-uncle, had distinguished himself, sometimes as master of his own squadron, sometimes as an admiral in the service of the republic of Genoa. Also a nephew of his, Colombo el Mezo, who commanded a squadron under the French king against Naples, is described as "a famous corsair, so terrible for his deeds against the infidels that the Moorish mothers used to frighten their children in the cradle with his name."

These mariners, noted among the nations as pirates, were well known under the French flag and were called Casanove or Coulon.¹ "To determine the exact relationship between the various French and Italian Colombos or Coulons of the fifteenth century would be hazardous. It is enough to say that no evidence that stands a

¹ Sometimes given Cassaneuve.

critical test remains to connect these famous mariners with the line of Christopher Columbus." So concludes Justin Winsor, after the most critical examination of the latest authorities, including the searching works of HARRISSE. And surely neither of these authors can be charged with partiality in favor of Columbus. It is the confusing of the great discoverer with these noted corsairs above referred to, and making him responsible for at least sharing in their piratical excursions, which has marked him down as a "*pirate*."

It is Columbus's own son, Fernando, who is particularly responsible for initiating this noted biographical blunder. Confessing ignorance as to the early part of his father's life, he adopted this tale of his piratical relationships on the authority of one SABILICUS, who is likewise the sole voucher for the startling story concerning the escape of Columbus from the burning galleys in the Venetian conflict, on an oar. This piratical encounter, well authenticated in the state papers of Spain and Venice, took place in 1485, when Columbus had already left Lisbon, and must have been too much enwrapped in his great scheme to be engaged in any such trifling and predatory affair.

Fernando, having grown up amidst courtiers, was evidently sensitive as to any insinuation concerning the humble origin of his father, and would rather associate him with first-class pirates than with an ancestry of wool-carders. "No great acumen, however, is necessary," says HARRISSE, "to discover that Fernando, as regards his ancestors, either in the direct line or otherwise, had very vague and unreliable notions. For instance, he includes in his pedigree the procurator Junius

Colonus, who lived under the Emperor Claudius. Now, Colonus was not his name, but Cilo. He then states that his father belonged to the family of a celebrated admiral in the service of the king of France, often called Colon or Colombo; but the fact is that this Colombo was simply a Frenchman by the name of Caseneuve."

Equally useless would it be to try to connect our hero with the more honorable families of the Colombos of Genoa and vicinity, since Harrisse finds trace of at least two hundred persons of that name in Liguria alone, in the time of Columbus, who were in nowise connected with him. One is forcibly reminded of a certain saying in the "History" attributed to his son Ferdinand. "I think it better," says he, "that all the honor be derived to us from his person than to go about to inquire whether his father was a merchant or a man of quality, who kept his hawks and hounds."

Christopher Columbus must be ranked with self-made men, who find their schools and schoolmasters mainly in the course of events, and acquire rich stores of systematic knowledge solely by dint of personal effort. But his school advantages in boyhood must have been fair,—must at least have laid the foundations for the wonderful superstructures of both general and special knowledge and information reared in after years. "It has of late been ascertained," says Winsor, "that the wool-combers of Genoa established local schools for the education of their children, and the young Christopher may have had his share of their instruction in addition to whatever he picked up at his trade, which continued, as long as he remained in Italy, that of his father." One who read so ex-

tensively as did Columbus must have read easily and with pleasure; and the samples of his handwriting which have come down to us would indicate a facile and most graceful penmanship. If the various pen-drawings attributed to him are authentic, and they certainly date far back and are unique, he must have had, as Winsor says, "a deft hand, too, in making a spirited sketch with a few strokes." The various accounts of his making maps and charts, even as a means of livelihood, necessarily imply skill in drawing and probably in coloring. That he had a fair use of Latin, that he was a practical mathematician, especially a nautical astronomer, and not only abreast but beyond the geographical attainments of his time, is obvious. That he *delighted* in geography and all branches of knowledge related to navigation is a necessary inference from the facts and course of his life. How much of all this varied accumulation of knowledge is to be attributed to the taste of university life at Pavia, ascribed by the "*History*" to his tender years of, say, from ten to twelve, must, at present, remain a mystery. Certain it is, according to his own statement, that he began a seafaring life at the mere boyhood period of fourteen. Imagine him then—"red-haired," "with a ruddy complexion" marked with the distinct freckles which a strong sea-air would depict on such a face, with a trace, perhaps, of that inflammation of the eyes which troubled him so seriously in after years, slender, active and enthusiastic, and we shall no doubt have a fairly correct picture of this boy before the mast, bound for any part of the Mediterranean, or even the wide and unknown sea outside the

straits. Pictures of wild adventures on the sea fed his ardent imagination, and that spirit of discovery which was the characteristic of the age must have made the blood tingle in his veins. Not only the severity of the elements,—the storm and the tempest—did he anticipate, for had he not listened to many a bloody tale of piracy, then so common as to be almost legalized? If he were on board the ship of some line of traffic, he would know that whole fleets of marauders might await her, and that there might be sea-fights as terrible as naval conflicts in regular warfare. Indeed the ship would be heavily armed and equipped, and every sailor would need the spirit and skill of the soldier. As there was no very nice distinction in those days between proper naval enterprise and privateering, and piracy, his judgment would not discriminate as to voyages and skirmishes which would be far from reputable in the clearer light of these days.

But it must be left to the imagination to fill out the biographical details from now on till Columbus appears again as a wool-weaver in company with his father at Savona, from 1470-'73, for the few striking incidents which have been wont to come into line to fill up the gap here, formerly supposed to be much larger than it now appears in the light of recent findings, are likely to prove doubtful, to say the least, as far as their relation to Columbus is concerned.

In a letter of Columbus, quoted by his son, he says: "It happened to me that King Rene, whom God has taken to himself, sent me to Tunis to take the gallese called *Fernandina*, and being near to the island of St. Peter, by Sardinia, I was told there were two ships and

a barack with the said galeasse, which discomposed my men, and they resolved to go no further, but to return to Marseilles for another ship and more men; and I, perceiving there was no going against their wills without some contrivance, yielded to their desires, and, changing the point of the needle, set sail when it was late, and next morning at break of day we found ourselves near Cape Carthagea, all aboard thinking we had certainly been sailing for Marseilles."

It is difficult for critics to place this event anywhere in the life of Rene without making Columbus too young to command a ship, unless we place the date of his birth earlier than the notarial records or the clearest statements in his letters would imply.

It must be said, however, that though Rene retired from active life too soon to allow the above incident a convenient date in the early history of Columbus, he lived till 1480. Possibly some incident connected with the fortunes of his regal family, and in which he may have felt an interest, would account for the above statement.

In the Admiral's biography, given as an introduction to the famous Codex Diplomaticus, as published by the Decurions of Genoa, this expedition for Rene is supposed to be in 1473.

Is it in this period of the life of Columbus we are to place that trip to the Grecian archipelago, when, in the island of Chios, he saw the mastic gathered?

CHAPTER II.

COLUMBUS IN PORTUGAL.



THE years spent by Columbus in Portugal must have been most important as a preparation for his momentous undertaking in after years. Here, surely, did he find his school and his school-masters. In order, therefore, to understand this period of his life we must recall what had been going on in Portugal for some time, and what was still in progress, as well as what was yet to be accomplished. Neither can we account for Columbus and his grand conception of a western route to India, unless we shall have first made the acquaintance of the noble Prince Henry of Portugal and his persevering enterprises on the west coast of Africa. This son of the Portuguese king, John I., and the English princess, Philippa, daughter of John of Gaunt, duke of Lancaster, was born March 4th, 1394. While yet a mere youth he distinguished himself on the Barbary coast, in the wars waged by his father against the Moors, and resulting in the conquest of Ceuta in 1415. While on this expedition, by means of his conversations with the Moors, he conceived of great discoveries to be made on the west coast of Africa; and this thought lodged in his youthful mind became the germ of one of the greatest enterprises of all time. Cape Nam, well up on the northwest coast of Africa, was the farthest known point. The name, which meant "*not*," was forcibly played upon in the old

proverb of that day: "He who goes to Cape Not will either return or not." That is, if he did not become terrified and come back he would surely be lost.

Immediately after the African conquest Prince Henry established a sort of nautical school at Sagres, near Cape Vincent, on the southwest coast of Spain; and from thence sending out ships commanded by the ablest seamen he could find, he undertook to solve the problem of Cape Not. His college and observatory were a sort of factory or workshop, in which maps, charts, and nautical instruments of all kinds were made and constantly improved. An improved use of the compass was now introduced into Europe, and the astrolabe, the original of the more modern quadrant, became common.

In time, notwithstanding the old proverb, Cape Not was passed, and the ships pushed on to Cape Bojador which means the *out-stretcher*. This now became the point of danger which no one dared to pass. Its desert coast, lashed by a tremendous surf and studded with perilous rocks, stood like a mysterious barrier forbidding further progress. Then, did not philosophers teach that just beyond this cape and underneath the equator the waters boiled under the blazing sun, and that no living thing could pass this line which divided the two hemispheres? After the failure of many a persevering effort, Gil Eannes finally returned in triumph, to the unutterable joy of seamen and cosmographers. With an unparalleled heroism he had doubled the stormy cape and satisfied the world that the sea was navigable and that men might live under the equator. Very soon, then, the equatorial line itself would be reached.

Now the noble prince was much encouraged and be-

lieved more than ever that the geographical ideas of Ptolemy and of Hipparchus before him, making the Atlantic a vast inland sea, surrounded by a southern junction of Africa and Asia, were incorrect; and that Africa was a continent, around which Eudoxus might have sailed from the Red Sea, and Hanno, the Carthaginian, from the Straits of Gibraltar, as had been affirmed by the ancients.¹ Thus, in 1434, when Henry was about at life's meridian, he had fairly established the success of his great enterprise, and put to silence the mutterings of the Portuguese nation, who had about concluded that it was but the part of folly to spend so much precious time and money in an undertaking which progressed so slowly and brought such poor returns.

Now that such visions of success rose before him on the unknown continent, he applied to the Pope to grant to Portugal all the territory she might discover from Cape Bojador to the Indies. Meanwhile, in passing down the coast, Porto Santo, Madeira, and the Azores had been brought to light. In 1445 one of the Prince's vessels made the immense voyage to Cape Verde. Five years later the Cape Verde Islands were discovered, and when Henry died, in 1460, his fleets had reached Sierra Leone. He was every way a noble man, concentrating a life-work in one great purpose, and establishing a new and most important era in the world's history.

Now Portugal was not only renowned for her enterprise in navigation, but was developing a most lucrative business in gold-dust, ivory, and slaves. Men had long since learned to strive for golden gains, but

¹ Whether these old-time heroes did perform this feat in navigation or not is still a question.

the glorious light of human freedom had not yet dawned.

Prince Henry had thoroughly aroused the nation; the new enterprises which he had inaugurated had become well established, and so King Alphonso, his nephew, and afterward John II., continued to push their fleets down the coast of the Dark Continent until Vasco de Gama turned the Cape of Good Hope in 1497. Thus in about eighty years the Portuguese had explored this coast of some five thousand miles.

Meanwhile Lisbon had become the centre and resort of cosmographers and navigators. Among others to be found here was Bartholomew Columbus, said to have been engaged in making globes, maps, charts, and nautical instruments. But how, and when, did Christopher Columbus first make his appearance in this his most convenient place in all the wide world? We might easily conceive of his coming here by a mental and moral gravitation, but what says the record?

His son Fernando, in his well-known biography of his father, brings him to these parts by means of a striking incident, as follows: "Whilst the Admiral sailed with the aforesaid Columbus the younger, which was a long time,¹ it fell out that, understanding the before-mentioned four great Venetian galleys were coming from Flanders, they went out to seek and found them beyond Lisbon, about Cape St. Vincent, which is in Portugal, where, falling to blows, they fought furiously and grappled, beating one another from vessel to vessel with utmost rage, making use, not only of their weap-

¹ We see, here, that the author was fully of the conviction that his father had been largely trained under "Columbus the pirate" in his early adventures at sea.

ons, but artificial fire-works; so that after they had fought from morning till evening, and abundance were killed on both sides, the Admiral's ship took fire, as did a great Venetian galley, which being fast grappled together with iron hooks and chains, used to this purpose by seafaring men, could neither of them be relieved because of the confusion there was among them, and the fright of the fire, which in a short time was so increased that there was no other remedy but for all that could to leap into the water, so to die sooner rather than bear the torture of the fire. But the Admiral being an excellent swimmer, and seeing himself two leagues or a little farther from land, laying hold of an oar which good fortune offered him, and sometimes resting upon it, sometimes swimming, it pleased God, who had preserved him for greater ends, to give him strength to get to the shore, but so tired and spent with the water that he had much ado to recover himself. And because it was not far from Lisbon, where he knew there were many Genoese, his countrymen, he went away thither as fast as he could, where, being known by them, he was so courteously received and entertained that he set up house and married a wife in that city." ¹

A noted incident, corresponding in every way to the above account, is known to have occurred in 1485.

¹ Concerning this same adventure Fernando Columbus says: "Jerome Donato was sent ambassador from Venice into Portugal to return thanks in the name of the republic to King John II., because he had clothed and relieved all the crew belonging to the aforesaid great galleys, which were coming from Flanders, relieving them in such a manner as they were enabled to return to Venice, they having been overcome by the famous corsair, Columbus the younger, near Lisbon, who had stripped and turned them ashore."

Rawdon Brown, in his "Calendar of State Papers in the Archives of Venice," gives the diplomatic correspondence between France and Venice, the latter demanding restitution from the former, under whose auspices the piratical expedition had been made. But as this incident occurred after Columbus had left Portugal, there must be some mistake in Fernando's quotation, or there must have been another previous incident, so similar as to be almost identical in character. As Justin Winsor says: "It may yet be discovered that it was from some earlier adventure that the buoyancy of an oar took him to the land."

Bernaldez says Columbus came to Lisbon in order to avail himself of the new facts concerning the African coast, that he might thereby improve his maps. It is evidently incorrect to associate Christopher Columbus with the noted piratical encounter between the French corsair and the Venetian galleys off Cape St. Vincent in 1485. The following letter from Ferdinand and Isabella to the King of England, November 5th, 1485, reads: "Columbus, Vice-Admiral and Commander of the fleet of the King of France, has captured, off the coast of Portugal, four Venetian vessels, laden with a great quantity of merchandise, belonging to Spanish subjects. As the capture is contrary to the treaties with France, Columbus has preferred to go to an English port, in order to divide the booty there. The King is requested to arrest the said Columbus and to restore the goods to their owners."

This was about the time when Christopher Columbus appeared before the Spanish monarchs to ask aid in his great undertaking. What would have been his

chance for a hearing had they been able to associate him with this annoying encounter just taken place off St. Vincent?

By whatever accident, circumstance, or influence Columbus came to Lisbon, certain it is that he could not have found in all the world so fit a place for the conception of his momentous undertaking. Would not the entire Portuguese nation be in sympathy with the achievements of Prince Henry? Would not Lisbon be the very heart-throbbing centre of the vast thoughts of discovery which now moved the thinking world? Here the future Admiral would come into contact and communion with the greatest minds then engaged in nautical and cosmographical studies. Here he would converse with the heroes of the ocean, who had seen and explored the coasts of the wonderful continent, and had gazed on the new stars of the southern skies. Would not his brother Bartholomew, who had an affection for him, amounting almost to veneration, do what he could to retain him as a companion and partner in his business? Here were also bankers from Genoa, who were ready to aid their countryman financially in time of need. A good brother, kind friends, a business ready to hand, money if needed, and a social atmosphere congenial to one's peculiar tastes—what more could the tempest-tossed stranger ask as a reason for anchorage? And here Christopher Columbus did cast anchor; joining hands, perhaps, with Bartholomew, not only in cartography and manufacture of nautical instruments, but possibly in copying rare manuscripts not yet in print, and in buying and selling books. And for all such commodities this must have been one of the best markets in the world.

True to his religious convictions while thus in a strange land, he went every day to worship in the chapel of the Convent of All Saints. Here his usual good fortune awaited him. Among the ladies of rank in some way connected with this institution was Doña Filipa Perestrello, daughter of a late distinguished navigator under Prince Henry. She possessed no great fortune, for her father had not found the colonization and governing of Porto Santo a very profitable enterprise. This island, of volcanic origin, black, barren, and treeless, probably was not very amenable to culture; and the governor in stocking it, having introduced tame rabbits, they multiplied so rapidly as to eat down every green thing, and obliged the good man to spend most of his remaining life in a fruitless effort to subdue them.¹ This gentleman having been an Italian, there must have been a natural bond of sympathy between his daughter and the Genoese stranger. The story is short,—they married, lived happily, and had a son, Diego, who became heir and successor to his father's fortunes.

Residing during the early days of his married life with his mother-in-law,² he must have found her quite congenial, for she entertained him with accounts of the voyages of her husband, deceased, and gave him full

¹ Darwin, in his *Origin of Species*, notes how Perestrello's rabbit, littering on the voyage and being landed at Porto Santo with her young, soon proved the rapid multiplication of species in the absence of enemies or adverse circumstances; and that the rabbits, fairly swarming all over the island, devoured every green and succulent thing, almost converting it into a desert. Prince Henry's biographers tell us that his enemies seized upon this calamity as an evidence against the expenses of colonization, since these islands were evidently not created for men, but only for beasts.

² This lady is now supposed to have been the second wife of Perestrello.

access to the charts and records he had left. Pedro Correo, who had married his wife's sister, was one of the noted navigators of his time, and had once been governor of Porto Santo. Intercourse with him must have been stimulating and instructive.

It is most interesting to note how all this is precisely in the line of what proved to be the ruling thought and purpose in the after life of Columbus.

In course of time the young couple took up their abode on the bride's estate in Porto Santo. Here Diego was born. This point being on the line of Portuguese navigation to Africa, Columbus, somewhere about this time, made an excursion thither—probably more than once.¹

Some time during this period of his life the grand conception of a western route to India dawned upon him. We need not resort to the slanderous rumor, circulated after his death and still advocated by some, that he obtained his information of a western country from a certain sea-captain or pilot who, having been blown out of his course and all the way to America by an adverse wind, had returned to die at the house of Columbus at Porto Santo. This rumor, brought forward by the defence during the lawsuit between Diego Columbus and the Spanish Crown, gained no credence at the time,² and certainly should gain none now, after being rejected by all the best authorities on the life of Columbus.

¹ Some effort has been made to throw discredit on this residence in Porto Santo and the events connected with it; but it is narrated by Las Casas, who got his information from the Admiral's son, Diego, himself.

² Oviedo says: "This story is a yarn which found credence only among common people."

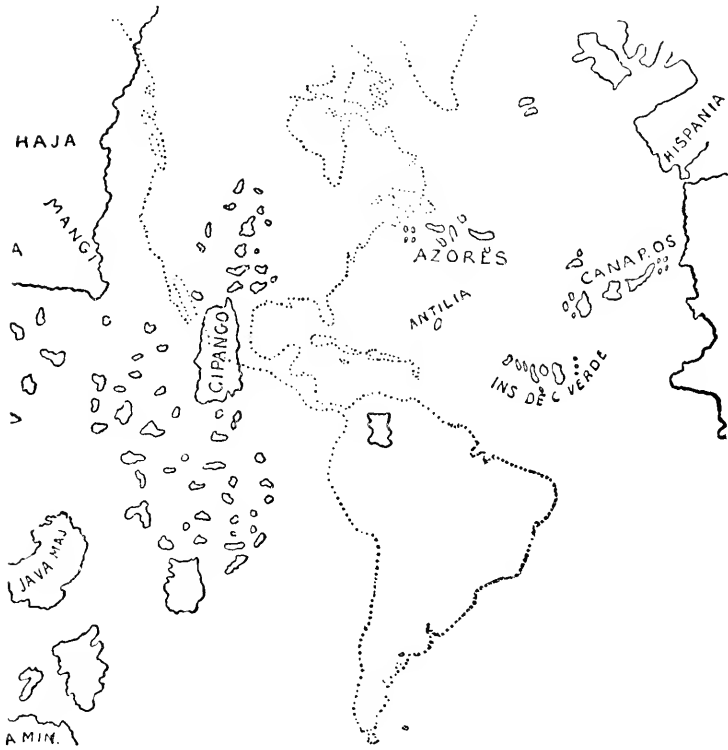
Scarcely less worthy of confidence is the later notion, that knowledge of the discovery of America by the Norsemen, first obtained from Rome and afterward confirmed by a voyage to Iceland, led Columbus to simply rediscover for the south what had long been known in the north. That the sea-kings from Iceland sailed to the North Atlantic coast of North America about the end of the tenth century, and that Columbus, according to a letter of his quoted by his son, went probably to Iceland, but possibly not farther than the Faröe Isles, in 1477, not even the tyro in history doubts. But where is the evidence of any connection between the two events? In all the voluminous records of facts concerning Columbus and his times, by both friends and foes, there is never a whisper of any Norse influence over his mind or conduct,—not even in the records of a lawsuit of several years, in which the defendants of the Crown, as against the claims of Diego, Columbus's eldest son, said everything possible against the late Admiral and Viceroy as the rightful discoverer of the New World. How could any such fact, had it existed, have failed to be brought to light during that long and thorough search? Nor has the most scrutinizing research up to the present hour brought any evidence whatever to support the above hypothesis. (See Justin Winsor's late work on Christopher Columbus, pp. 135-148).

Then how unaccountable it is that the Pope, if he knew that Columbus had a budget of facts from the north, so important to the interests of the extension of the church, did not so much as help the argument with the touch of his little finger, when our hero was plead-

ing with the crowned heads for those few small ships? The sovereigns to whom the overtures were made were all the most faithful children of the church, as were also their counsellors at Salamanca and elsewhere. The slightest suggestion from the Holy See would have turned the scale at once in favor of the Genoese adventurer.

But, waiving all *external* evidence, let us look at that which is *internal*. Let us pursue Columbus from court to court and across the sea as he goes in search of land to the westward, somewhat after the manner of a detective, and see what knowledge and what motives his own movements betray. His grand discovery was no mere happy hit, like that of Cabral, when he ran onto the coast of Brazil on his way to Africa some years later. Columbus worked to a theory, founded upon a wide range of facts and deductions more or less correct; and that theory would seem to be none other than the one claimed by himself, his son, and his early biographers generally. Given on the one hand that the earth is round, and on the other that India could be reached by sailing around Africa, as the Portuguese believed and finally proved, and did it not follow, as a necessary inference, that India might be reached by sailing to the west? Of course he had no conception of a continent between Europe on the east of the Atlantic and Asia on the west. He had made an estimate of the time required for the sun to pass from east to west over the two thousand miles of the Mediterranean sea, and hence formed some conception of the distance around the earth over which the sun passed in twenty-four hours. Influenced by the views of Ptolemy, Marinus of Tyre, and

Alfraganus the Arabian, he believed the earth to be much smaller than it is. "The world is small, much smaller than people suppose," he wrote to Isabella during his fourth voyage. Then he thought the eastern coast of Asia to be about where the Isthmus of Darien was finally discovered, and Cipango or Japan to be about where he found the larger West India Islands. His



THE ACTUAL AMERICA IN RELATION TO BEHAIM'S GEOGRAPHY.

brilliant conceptions of India, then called Mangi and Cathay, and of Cipango, were derived either directly or

indirectly from the glowing accounts of Marco Polo, whom Humboldt calls "the greatest traveller of any age," and probably also from Sir John Mandeville. These writers had travelled through Eastern Asia, respectively, in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. A careful study of their writings and also of the reports of other oriental travellers, and not the manuscript accounts of the tours of the Vikings or Norsemen, were the guiding star of Columbus all through his voyages of discovery. Hence he became the ready victim of many a false and absurd notion; and the reader is frequently amused by the egregious blunders which he was constantly making. "When the natives of Cuba pointed to the interior of their island and said 'Cubanican,' Columbus interpreted it to mean 'Kublai Khan;,' and the Cuban name of 'Mangon' became to his ear the Mangi of Sir John Mandeville.¹ Indeed, nothing surprised him more than to find only naked savages where he had expected to find the wealthy and luxurious nations of the civilized Orient. Humboldt has well said, "If Columbus had desired to seek a continent of which he had obtained information in Iceland, he would assuredly not have directed his course southward from the Canary Islands."

Had not Aristotle, Seneca, Pliny and Strabo all spoken of land to be found, in all probability, within moderate sailing distance to the west? What land could this be but that of Polo and Mandeville? There was, besides Columbus, at least one man living who believed in the practicability of finding India in the western ocean. Dr. Paulo Toscanelli, of Florence, a

¹ Justin Winsor, vol. II, p. 42, Narrative and Critical Hist. Am.

man of great scientific attainments, especially in the sublime field of astronomy, was so moved by this one thought that he might have been regarded as a sort of monomaniac on the subject. And the peculiar sentiments of this *savant* must have been more or less known, for Alphonso IV. is said to have consulted him about this time (1474) as to a western passage to "the land where the spices grow." The views of this interesting man betray a familiarity with the works of Polo and Mandeville and other travellers, perhaps; and he also claims to have derived facts of great importance from "an ambassador to Pope Eugenius IV., who told him the great friendship there was between these princes, their people and Christians."

To him Columbus wrote in about 1474, and received, in reply, a map of the supposed lands in the western ocean, in their relations to the known parts of the world; and also a copy of a letter recently written to a learned ecclesiastic of Lisbon, for the special benefit of King Alphonso. The letter was as follows:

"To Christopher Columbus, Paul the Physician wisheth health.

"I perceive your noble and earnest desire to sail to those parts where the spice is produced; and therefore in answer to a letter of yours, I send you another letter, which some days since I wrote to a friend of mine, and servant to the King of Portugal, before the wars of Castile, in answer to another he writ to me by his Highnesses order, upon this same account, and I send you another sea chart like that I sent him, which will satisfy your demands. The copy of that letter is this:

“To Ferdinand Martinez, canon of Lisbon, Paul the Physician wishes health.

“I am very glad to hear of the familiarity you have with your most serene and magnificent King, and though I have very often discoursed concerning the short way there is from hence to the Indies, where the spice is produced, by sea, which I look upon to be shorter than you take by the coast of Guinea, yet you now tell me that his Highness would have me make out and demonstrate it so as it may be understood and put in practice. Therefore, tho' I could better show it him with a globe in my hand, and make him sensible of the figure of the world, yet I have resolved to render it more easy and intelligible to show this way upon a chart, such as are used in navigation, and therefore I send one to his Majesty, made and drawn with my own hand, wherein is set down the utmost bounds of the west from Iceland, in the north, to the furthest part of Guinea, with all the islands that lie in the way; opposite to which western coast is descried the beginning of the Indies, with the islands and places whither you may go, and how far you may bend from the north pole towards the equinoctial and for how long a time; that is, how many leagues you may sail before you come to those places most fruitful in all sorts of spice, jewels, and precious stones. Do not wonder if I term that country where the spice grows *west*, that product being generally ascribed to the *east*, because those who shall sail westward will always find those places in the west, and they that travel by land eastwards will ever find those places in the east. The straight lines that lie lengthways in the chart show the distance there is from

west to east, the other cross them show the distance from north to south. I have also marked down in the said chart several places in India where ships might put in upon any storm or contrary winds or any other accident unforeseen. And, moreover, to give you full information of all those places which you are very desirous to know, you must understand that none but traders live or reside in all those islands, and that there is there as great a number of ships and seafaring people with merchandise as in any other part of the world, particularly in a most noble part called Zacton, where there are every year an hundred large ships of pepper loaded and unloaded, besides many other ships that take in other spice. This country is mighty populous, and there are many provinces and kingdoms and innumerable cities under the dominion of a prince called the Great Cham, which name signifies king of kings, who for the most part resides in the province of Cathay. His predecessors were very desirous to have commerce and be in amity with Christians, and 200 years since sent ambassadors to the Pope desiring him to send them many learned men and doctors to teach them our faith; but by reason of some obstacles the ambassadors met with they returned back without coming to Rome. Besides, there came an ambassador to Pope Eugenius IV., who told him the great friendship there was between those princes, their people, and Christians. I discoursed with him a long while upon the several matters of the grandeur of their royal structures and of the greatness, length, and breadth of their rivers, and he told me many wonderful things of the multitude of towns and cities founded along the banks of the rivers, and that there

were 200 cities upon one only river with marble bridges over it of a great length and breadth, and adorned with abundance of pillars. This country deserves, as well as any other, to be discovered; and there may not only be great profit made there, and many things of value found, but also gold, silver, all sorts of precious stones, and spices in abundance, which are not brought into our ports. And it is certain that many wise men, philosophers, astrologers, and other persons skilled in all arts and very ingenious, govern that mighty province and command their armies. From Lisbon, directly westward, there are in the chart 26 spaces, each of which contains 250 miles, to the most noble and vast city of Quisay, which is 100 miles in compass—that is, 35 leagues; in it there are 10 marble bridges. The name signifies a heavenly city, of which wonderful things are reported, as to the ingenuity of the people, the buildings, and revenues. This space above mentioned is almost a third part of the globe. This city is in the province of Mango, bordering on that of Cathay, where the King for the most part resides. From the Island Antilia, which you call the seven cities, and whereof you have some knowledge, to the most noble island of Cipango, are 10 spaces, which make 2,500 miles, or 225 leagues, which island abounds in gold, pearls, and precious stones; and you must understand they cover their temples and palaces with plates of pure gold. So that, for want of knowing the way, all these things are hidden and concealed, and yet may be gone to with safety. Much more might be said, but having told you what is most material, and you being wise and judicious, I am satisfied there is nothing

of it but what you understand, and therefore I will not be more prolix. Thus much may serve to satisfy your curiosity, it being as much as the shortness of time and my business would permit me to say. So I remain most ready to satisfy and serve his Highness to the utmost in all the commands he shall lay upon me.

“FLORENCE, *June 25, 1474.*”

The above letter was soon followed by another, very similar in character. It is a literary curiosity, without which this biography would scarcely be complete, since it is a most important link in the chain of events and discloses the magnificent vision which allured our hero. And while there is no evidence that Columbus borrowed his first thought of a western route from the Florentine doctor,¹ that *savant* was, without doubt, much in advance of him, in the detailed items and elaborateness of his conception. His imagination had worked much more minutely on this splendid picture of the Orient; using, in all probability, Marco Polo's high coloring, as well as the exaggerated statements of travellers, who claimed to give their facts and figures from recent observation. At this time, when the new thought dawning on the mind of Columbus would be almost enough to place him among the insane, in the estimation of his fellows, the chart sent by Toscanelli, planning his route in anticipation, and this letter, so positive and explicit in all its particulars, must have afforded an immense impulse. Imagine him poring

¹ Humboldt believed that the idea of reaching the *east* by sailing *west* awoke simultaneously in the minds of Columbus and Toscanelli.

Harris, in his *Notes on Columbus*, p. 85, says, “Navarrete exhibits documents which prove that Columbus first thought of his idea in Portugal, in 1470, three years before he ever wrote to Toscanelli.”

over them in the still hours of the night. Every line in the chart and every sentence of the letter would cause the fibres and tissues of nerve and brain to vibrate in response.

Then he may have turned to his famous *Imago Mundi* by Cardinal D'Ailly, and reviewing those references to the learned ancients, from Aristotle to Roger Bacon, which implied the sphericity of the earth and the eastern shores of Asia not far to the westward of Spain, perhaps wrote one of his Latin notes on the margin. Or he may have revelled in the wonderful words of the *Medea* by the poet Seneca,—

“ Veniunt annis fœcula feris,
 Quibus Oceanus vincula rerum
 Laxit, et ingens pateat tellus,
 Thetysque novos legat orbés,
 Nec sic terris Ultima Thule,”—

which has been rendered, “Times will come, in distant ages, when the ocean will reveal its mysteries; an immense land will appear, Thetys will uncover new continents, and the Shetlands will no longer be the extremity of the world.”

“Which poetical effusion so greatly pleased Columbus,” says HARRISSE, “that he quoted it twice in full, not to speak of Fernando, who wrote on the margin of his own copy of Seneca: ‘This prophecy was accomplished by my father, Christopher Columbus, in the year 1492.’”

“Coming events cast their shadows before.” While Columbus was evolving his great scheme of a western voyage, not a few heads were teeming more or less vaguely with notions of land in that direction. Antonio

Leone, of Madeira, told him that, sailing thither one hundred leagues, he had descried three islands in the distance. Some of the inhabitants of the Canaries were sure that they had seen, at different times, a large island in the western ocean, its magnificent landscape of lofty mountains and deep valleys looming up distinctly above the wild waste of waters. Indeed they had even applied to the King of Portugal for permission to go out and take possession of it; but having made several expeditions, failed to find land, which still, however, rose occasionally on their vision.

How certain sailors to the far west had picked up from the waves pieces of wood carved with some other implements than those common to civilization; how reeds of immense size, so that "every joint would hold above four quarts of wine," corresponding to those which Ptolemy said grew in India, had floated to the shores of some of the western islands; how the people of the Azores had seen among the debris thrown up by the waves huge trunks of pine trees, such as did not grow in their part of the world; and how there had floated onto the shores of the island, Flores, two drowned men, "very broad faced" and unlike those of any known country—all these rumors have become familiar to the readers of biographies of Columbus. And their chief significance is *the general state of mind which they discover*. If the scholars of the closet and the cloister were too far removed from the facts of nature to sympathize with the great conception of Columbus, at least a few of the common people were nearer to the truth. Their eyes were out upon the ocean, and there was more or less of a presentiment of land about to be found.

But Columbus was the representative of this important idea. Imagine him as a solitaire on the lonely island of Porto Santo, seated, perhaps, on some "rock beside the sea." Probably no man living was more familiar with the scanty geography of the world, then known only to the few. Its incomplete chart of the wide and unknown sea could be called up to memory and the imagination at any moment. He seemed to stand on the shores of the infinite; and before his vision there arose, in the distance, realms of wealth and beauty, peopled with countless numbers.

Whether the initial thought was all his own, or whether it was more or less derived from some one else, he was at least able to receive and assimilate great thoughts, to make from them the grandest generalizations, and, what was greater still, had the singular courage to *act* upon their resultant of truth. The clever recluse sitting in his easy-chair might speculate upon populous countries more or less distant in the western seas, and the cosmographer might project them upon parchment, and the poet put them into verse. This would require a mere modicum of the geographical learning of the time, and a glint of imagination. But, for one in the humble ranks of poverty and toil, to amass the learning of the age, co-ordinating and utilizing it to the greatest practical end, to enlist kings, to procure ships and crews and venture into the terrors of the dark and unknown seas, and sail into the teeth of mutiny and danger inconceivable, till the land on the other side of the globe appeared, will ever remain a most astounding achievement.

CHAPTER III.

COLUMBUS AND KING JOHN II.



DO conceive of a great enterprise as possible is one thing, but to project the best plan for bringing it to pass is quite another. Some years seem to have rolled by before Columbus determined *how* to undertake his scheme. He was too poor to make an expedition on his own account, as the sea-kings from the north seem to have done; and, as social orders and governments then existed, the enterprise was too great for any but crowned heads or established nations. He comprehended the situation. Tradition says he first applied to the Republic of Genoa by letter for the patronage needed, thus giving his native place the first preference. However this may have been, we know he applied to King John II., who came to the throne of Portugal in 1481, in his twenty-fifth year. This monarch was the worthy successor to the discoveries of Prince Henry, his great-uncle; and with his accession the grand conception of reaching India by circumnavigating Africa received a new impulse. With a true spirit of enterprise, he built a fort on the coast of Guinea to protect commerce with the natives. Thus far the African enterprise had cost more than it had brought in return; but the Portuguese, as also Western Europe in general, had the most fabulous notions of the wealth and resources of India. Gold, pearls, precious stones, spices, and the finest of silken fabrics were among its wondrous products. When the channel of this trade, now struggling slowly across the Asiatic con-

continent and enriching the marts of Italy, should be made to flow around Africa into Portugal, a rich reward for all the expenses of exploration would be realized.

King John was, no doubt, familiar with the astounding reports of Polo and Mandeville, as also with those of Rabbi Benjamin, the Spanish Jew, who had visited the scattered tribes of Israel in Tartary, and those of the ecclesiastics whom Pope Innocent had sent out to the Grand Khan, according to his own request, brought home by the elder Polo. He had also been particularly interested in the rumors about Prester John, a Christian king, believed to be ruling somewhere in the remote East, if not in the interior of Africa. He had even sent out ambassadors in search of the latter. Impatient of the slow progress along the coast of the dark continent, he had called a select council of the most learned astronomers and cosmographers in his kingdom, including the learned Martin Behaim, to ascertain in what particulars the methods of navigation might be improved. The result of this conference was a better use of the astrolabe, an instrument similar to our quadrant, and applied to find the distance of the sailor from the equator by means of the altitude of the sun. If Prince Henry had improved the use of the compass, King John had thus rendered a similar service to the great enterprises of navigation.¹

¹ Had it not been for the compass and the astrolabe thus brought into use, the great age of discovery could not have been inaugurated. Irving says truly, "The mariner now, instead of coasting the shores like the ancient navigators, and, if driven from the land, groping his way back in doubt and apprehension by the uncertain guidance of the stars, might adventure boldly into unknown seas, confident of being able to trace his course by means of the compass and the astrolabe."—*Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*, vol. I, p. 66.

This royal personage, above all others, would seem to be the one whom Columbus might approach in behalf of his magnificent proposal. Being of a liberal mind and in sympathy with the latest scientific views of his time, he saw, at a glance, the immense advantages promised by the new proposition. But it was so novel, so adventuresome, that it would not be well to encourage it without the advice and approval of his wisest counsellors. A very select group, perhaps not more than three—Rodrigo and Joseph, Jews, and Diego Ortez de Calzadilla, bishop of Ceuta and confessor to the King—were chosen to deliberate and advise upon the matter. These men, all noted for their learning in the sciences pertaining to nautical affairs, gave their judgment against Columbus's proposition, as being altogether too extravagant and impractical. "To such men," says Irving, "the project of a voyage directly westward into the midst of that boundless waste to seek some visionary land appeared as extravagant as it would be at the present day to launch forth in a balloon into the regions of space in quest of some distant star."

It would seem, however, that the principal cause of hesitancy on the part of the King was the fact stated by Ferdinand Columbus,—that the explorations on the west coast of Africa, which occupied nearly half of the working force of Portugal, and in which great numbers had died, and which had not as yet brought in very flattering returns, would not admit of the additional expense and risk implied in the plan of Columbus.

But the King was not satisfied. He therefore called

a second council, much larger than the first, to consider the feasibility of the undertaking. But its decision was similar to that of the former. The discussion must have been decidedly enthusiastic,—almost a polite and good-natured sparring. The bishop of Ceuta, whom the King regarded as one of his chief advisers, not only discouraged the plan of Columbus, but even spoke against the continuation of the African enterprises, as tending “to distract the attention, drain the resources, and divide the power of the nation, already too much weakened by recent war and pestilence. While their forces were thus scattered abroad on remote and unprofitable expeditions, they exposed themselves to attack from their active enemy, the King of Castile.” “The greatness of monarchs did not arise so much from the extent of their dominions as from the wisdom and ability with which they governed. In the Portuguese nation, it would be madness to launch into enterprises without first considering them in connection with its means. The King had already enough on his hands in Africa, without taking up this new and wild scheme. If he wished employment for the active valor of the nation, the war in which he was engaged against the Moors of Barbary was sufficient.”

To this conservative advice the Count of Villa Real made a most spirited reply: “Portugal was not in its infancy, nor were its princes so poor as to lack means to engage in discoveries. Even granting that these proposed by Columbus were conjectural, why should they abandon those begun by their late Prince Henry? Portugal was at peace with all Europe. It would be

her greatest glory to search out the secrets of the dark sea of which other nations were afraid. Thus employed, she would escape the idleness incident to a continued peace—idleness, that source of vice, that silent file, which, little by little, wore away the strength and valor of a nation. Great souls were formed for great enterprises. Why should one so religious as the bishop of Ceuta oppose this undertaking? Was not its final object to spread the Catholic faith from pole to pole?"

The African explorations were thus sustained, but the cause of Columbus was too uncertain to be included in this appeal by the Count, smacking so perceptibly of generous enterprise.

Evidently these advisers saw that the King was not even yet satisfied, for the bishop of Ceuta suggested as a *quiclus* that there should be a clandestine expedition sent to the west under the instructions furnished by Columbus, to see if there were any such lands as he supposed.

When Columbus was now called upon to exhibit his charts again, and to give the most complete and explicit account of his anticipated voyage, he no doubt regarded it as much in his favor. Surely the King and his counsellors were now being converted to his position! But, alas! contrary to his usual high sense of justice, the King was yielding to the false allurements of Calzadilla. A ship was being fitted up, ostensibly to carry provisions to the Cape Verde Islands, but really to make a trial voyage to the far west.¹ But

¹Fernando Columbus says: "The King, by the advice of one Doctor Calzadilla, of whom he made great account, resolved to send a caravel pri-

this enterprise, so ill-founded, lacked the conviction, the courage, and the determination necessary to so great an undertaking; and the ship soon returned, with no results except that the sailors were thoroughly frightened by the huge waves and wild waste of waters, which stretched out like an infinite expanse in all directions. One might as well expect to find land in the sky, they said. Most heartily did they laugh at such a foolhardy enterprise. This, of course, would cover their failure.

When Columbus discovered the mean advantage which had been taken of him he shook off the dust from his feet against Portugal. On the strength of Fernando's *History* it has generally been supposed that his wife was now dead, and that his only child, his little son Diego, was his solitary companion, as empty-handed he looked out into the world for some other aid to bring to pass his grand scheme.

But an autograph letter of his now in the possession of the Duke of Veraguas, his descendant by the female line, and quoted by Navarrete, tome ii, doc. cxxxvii, says that when leaving Portugal he left wife and children and saw them no more. Thus his entire family, except Diego, must have died soon after he left. There would seem to be much probability in the conjecture of Mr. Fisk, who says: "As Las Casas, who knew Diego so well, also supposed his mother to have died before his father left Portugal, it is most likely that she died soon afterwards. Ferdinand Columbus says that Diego

vately to attempt that which the Admiral had proposed to him; because, in case those countries were so discovered, he thought himself not obliged to bestow any great reward which might be demanded on account of the discovery."

was left in charge of some friars at the convent of La Rabida, near Palos; Las Casas is not quite so sure; he thinks that Diego was left with some friend of his father at Palos, or perhaps at La Rabida. These mistakes were easy to make, for both La Rabida and Huelva were close by Palos, and we know that Diego's aunt, Muliar, was living at Huelva. It is pretty clear that Columbus never visited La Rabida before the autumn of 1491. My own notion is that Columbus may have left his wife with an infant, and perhaps an older child, relieving her of the care of Diego by taking him to his aunt, and intending, as soon as practicable, to reunite the family. He clearly did not know at the outset whether he should stay in Spain or not."

It would seem that he left Portugal secretly, and a letter from King John, years afterwards, asking him to return, and promising to protect him from any civil or criminal process pending against him, may justify the statement made by some that he was trammelled by debt. Having been so deeply immersed in his studies and speculations about land in the west, he may have suffered his financial affairs to go to ruin.

His son Fernando says that "about the end of the year 1484 the Admiral stole away privately out of Portugal, with his son James, for fear of being stopped by the King; for he, being sensible how faulty they were whom he had sent with the caravel, had a mind to restore the Admiral to his favor, and desired he should renew the discourse of his enterprise; but, not being so diligent to put this in execution as the Admiral was in getting away, he lost that good opportunity."

CHAPTER IV.

COLUMBUS IN SPAIN.



It is the opinion of critics generally that it was not later than 1484 when Columbus left Portugal, and that some time during 1485 or 1486 he first appeared before the court of Spain. Where was he during the intervening time? Surely he could not have been idle, for the one and all-absorbing thought of his life pressed heavily upon him, and he must now have been at least from thirty-eight to forty years old. He would realize the importance of economizing his time.

It is generally believed that he went to Genoa on leaving Portugal, and that he now applied in person to the republic for aid to carry out his plan. The nation was in a state of depression at the time, and there seems to have been a disposition on the part of the senate to make light of their obscure countryman. "Who is this Christopher Columbus?" some one asks. "A sailor of this city," another replies; "the son of Domenico Columbo, a wool-comber. His brothers and sister are here in humble circumstances." With the depression of the little republic, the obscurity of the applicant, and the wildness of the proposal, what afterward proved to be the discovery of a new world received but little attention.

Some say he now went to Venice and presented his

plan, but to no purpose.¹ Of this, however, there is no official record.

At this same time he is said to have made provision out of his slender purse for his aged father and for the education of his younger brother, the family now having returned to Genoa, after having spent some years at Savona. Some ill-fortune would seem to have befallen them, to have made them thus dependent. Possibly Christopher again set up for a time his little establishment for making maps and globes and for copying and selling books.

It has ever been the custom to follow the order of Fernando Columbus's biography of his father, and thus introduce the future Admiral into Spain by means of the touching incident at the door of the monastery, La Rabida; but ever since the publication of Navarrete's famous collection of documents there has been a doubt as to the priority of that event, in relation to his seven years of solicitation. Finally, Mr. Fisk, in his "Discovery of America," has, as it seems to us, arrived at a proper co-ordination. He says: "The error of Ferdinand Columbus, a very easy one to commit, and not in the least damaging to his general character as biographer, lay in confusing his father's two real visits (in 1484 and 1491) to Huelva with two visits (one imaginary in 1484 and one real in 1491) to La Rabida, which was close by, between Huelva and Palos. The visits were all the more likely to get mixed up in recollection, because in each case their object was little Diego, and

¹ It is but just to say that these traditions of an application to Genoa and Venice are now regarded as of very doubtful authority, and yet it is difficult to account for the whereabouts of Columbus at this time, except on this supposition.

in each case he was left in charge of somebody in that neighborhood. The confusion has been helped by another for which Ferdinand is not responsible, viz: the friar Juan Perez has been confounded with another friar, Antonio de Marchena, who, Columbus says, was the only person who from the time of his first arrival in Spain had always befriended him and never mocked at him. These worthy friars twain have been made into one (*c. g.*, 'the prior of the convent, Juan Perez de Marchena,' Irving's Columbus, vol. I, p. 128), and it has often been supposed that Marchena's acquaintance began with Columbus at La Rabida in 1484, and that Diego was left at the convent at that time. But some modern sources of information have served at first to baffle, and then, when more carefully sifted, to clear up the story. In 1508 Diego Columbus brought suit against the Spanish crown to vindicate his claim to certain territories discovered by his father, and there was a long investigation, in which many witnesses were summoned and past events were busily raked over the coals. Among the witnesses were Rodriguez Cabejudo and the physician Garcia Fernandez, who gave from personal recollection a very lucid account of the affairs at La Rabida. These proceedings are printed in Navarrete, *Coleccion de viages*, tom. iii, pp. 238-591. More recently the publication of the great book of Las Casas has furnished some very significant clues, and the elaborate researches of M. HARRISSE have furnished others. (See Las Casas, lib. i, cap. xxix, xxxi; HARRISSE, tom. i, pp. 341-372; tom. ii, pp. 227-231; cf. PERAGALLO, *l'Authenticité*, &c., pp. 117-134.) It now seems clear that Marchena, whom Columbus knew from his first arrival in

Spain, was not associated with La Rabida. At that time Columbus left Diego, a mere infant, with his wife's sister at Huelva. Seven years later, intending to leave Spain forever, he went to Huelva and took Diego, then a small boy. On his way from Huelva to the Seville road, and thence to Cordova (where he would have been joined by Beatrix and Ferdinand), he happened to pass by La Rabida, where up to that time he was evidently unknown, and to attract the attention of the prior Juan Perez, and the wheel of fortune suddenly and unexpectedly turned. As Columbus's next start was not for France, but for Granada, his boy was left in charge of two trustworthy persons."

Falling back upon authenticated facts, he appears at Cordova in 1486, where the court of the sovereigns was then held.

To get into the royal presence on so strange an errand would not have been easy at any time, but the present was singularly unfavorable. The monarchs were just in the midst of the greatest home enterprise undertaken during their entire reign—the conquest of the Moors. For many hundred years these interlopers had been a thorn in the sides of the rulers of Spain. A brave, intelligent, active and enterprising people, they had built up an immense civilization throughout the southern part of the peninsula. Granada, entrenched in the mountains of Sierra Nevada, was their capital; and Malaga was their seaport. To drive the infidels out of Spain was the desideratum alike of church and state. The united kingdoms of Ferdinand and Isabella, therefore, were vying with each other in the stern battle, as the Moors contested every inch of ground

in the most heroic manner. The grand dukes and nobles were in full force, like so many lesser armies combined; and the magnificence of martial and armorial display was not to be surpassed by anything of the age. Scarcely less imposing was the crowd of ecclesiastics, who were also in the field to give counsel and aid in this holy war. The King and Queen, with all the court, moved along with the encampment.

Such was the absorption of the royal and the public mind when Columbus somehow made his appearance before Fernando de Talavera, a high dignitary of the church, who was now confessor to the Queen. This introduction was unfortunate, for Talavera was not the kind of man to sympathize with the views of Columbus. If there were anything in this new adventure in cosmography and navigation, it seemed strange to him that the wise heads of the past had not discovered it. Men had not yet found out that "*the world moves.*" He deemed the proposition wholly unworthy the attention of the monarchs in the present crisis of national affairs. But Alonzo de Quintanilla, controller of the treasury of Castile, to whom Columbus had been assigned as a guest, was a person of progressive thought, and "delighted in great undertakings." Becoming a thorough convert to the new scheme, he gradually introduced this man of strange dreams to persons of influence about the court; first to the brothers Geraldini, one a nuncio from the Pope, the other a learned instructor in the royal household; then to the Grand Cardinal de Mendoza, the most influential subject in the two kingdoms, and sometimes called "the third King of Spain." Thus, after a detention of

about a year, this powerful personage in the royal councils succeeded in gaining attention. Like an immense revelation must the grand conception of Columbus have burst upon the imagination of the King and Queen. How far beyond anything which Portugal had achieved would be its vast results. The fabulous wealth of the Indies—the desideratum of the nations—would thus come directly across the ocean sea into Spain, instead of struggling overland into Italy, or sailing around Africa into Portugal. But was this vast enterprise feasible? Might they safely undertake it?¹ It seemed too great—this vision of the Orient—to be practicable. They would at least move cautiously. Talavera was therefore instructed to call a council of the most learned and scientific men in the two kingdoms, at Salamanca, the chief seat of learning in Spain.² Whether great in number or not, it must have been an august assembly, consisting, for the most part, of ecclesiastics versed in astronomy, geography, mathematics, and sciences connected with navigation.

How will this man of the sea appear before such an array of learning and wisdom? Will he be equal to the occasion in presenting his vast and unheard-of idea? Aye, this tall figure, in plain—possibly threadbare—apparel, is majestic and impressive. His arguments, thoroughly thought out and well arranged, are from the most authentic resources in science and litera-

¹ "Indeed, when it is considered that the most pressing internal affairs of kingdoms are neglected by the wisest rulers in times of war, it is wonderful that he succeeded in obtaining any audience at all."—*Helps, Col.*, p. 65.

² This junta met in the convent of St. Stephen. There is no evidence that the University of Salamanca bore any official or responsible part in these deliberations.

ture, well sandwiched with incidents and facts. If not so ready to give away all the plans of his route as he had been in Portugal, he is self-possessed and eloquent. Maps, charts, and books are all at his command. This is no mere visionary conception, but a most direct and conclusive line of deductive reasoning, which, in more modern times, would be pronounced scientific.

The more liberal members of the council, the windows of whose souls have been open to the light, are deeply moved, and receive impressions which will soon mature into conviction; but the majority, Talavera among the rest, feel no force of argument, but only a severe shock of deep-seated prejudices. Time-honored notions, writings of the church fathers, and the scriptures are all made to do duty in opposition.

Let us be auditors for a few minutes in this assembly—possibly mere committee-room—of four hundred years ago, and catch at least the echo of a few of their leading objections to Columbus's idea. Here, for instance, comes a famous quotation from Lactantius, one of the early fathers in the Latin church. It is concerning this absurd doctrine of the sphericity of the earth. "Is there any one so foolish," he asks, "as to believe that there are antipodes, with their feet opposite to ours;—people who walk with their heels upwards and their heads hanging down—where everything is topsy-turvey, where the trees grow with their branches downwards, and where it rains, hails, and snows upwards?"

Then the shade of St. Augustine, another of the church fathers, is made to appear on the stand and testify against this preposterous notion that the earth is

round and that there are antipodes. "It is contrary to the scriptures," he says, "for they teach that all men are descended from Adam, which would be impossible if men lived on the other side of the earth, for they could never have crossed the wide sea."

And do not the scriptures imply that the earth is flat? Do they not speak of the foundation thereof, and of the heavens stretched out like a curtain or tent on the earth? This man of strange notions, in the presence of ecclesiastics, let him beware lest he smell of heresy and be made to feel the fangs and fires of the newly-established inquisition!¹

Then turning the views of Columbus against himself they said he never could pass the torrid zone, for its heat is insupportable; that the distance around the earth is so great that it would require three years to make the tour, and no ship could be stocked with provisions and water for so long a time; that if one should go directly across the ocean to India the rotundity of the earth would present an impassable mountain to the return voyage, over which no wind could propel the ship.

To every one of these objections, as well as to the many others we cannot mention here, Columbus made a rational and adequate reply, such as would be re-

¹ "Perhaps we should have had the spectacle of Christopher Columbus before the terrible Torquemada if Mgr. Alessandro Geraldini, of Aumlia in Perugia, a man of learning and piety, but reasonable and prudent, who was present at these sittings, had not overheard their menacing expressions against Columbus, and, seeing the danger he was in from their blind fanaticism, run to report to the great cardinal the condition of things, and by interposing that great man's authority persuaded those over-zealous persons that though St. Augustine was a wonderful saint and doctor, still he had never been made authority in geography and cosmography."—*Tarducci, in his Columbus, gives the above as related by Geraldini himself.*

garded incontestable at the present time; but these great dignitaries could not easily unlearn their old notions; so the majority voiced the report, that this new project was "*vain and impossible, and that it did not belong to the majesty of such great princes to determine anything upon such weak grounds of information.*" This council is supposed to have been held in the winter of 1486-'87.¹

The opposers of Columbus no doubt regarded this decision as a death-blow to his proposition; but, in fact, the mere discussion of such a theme was a great move forward. The leaven of the new idea, with its arguments so well presented, had been thoroughly worked into positive and leading minds. Time alone would be needed to assimilate the determining forces of the nation. Nor should we conceive of the years of patient waiting which followed as wholly without encouragement. The parties above mentioned as helping Columbus to come before the King and Queen, and also other persons of influence, came more and more fully into sympathy with his views.² Columbus still

¹ "Ferdinand and Isabella seem not to have taken the extremely unfavorable view of the matter entertained by the junta of cosmographers, or at least to have been willing to dismiss Columbus gently, for they merely said that, with the wars at present on their hands, and especially that of Granada, they could not undertake any new enterprises, but when that war was ended they would examine his plan more carefully."—*Helps, Col., p. 67.*

² "One of these was father Diego Deza, young in years, but already the highest professor in theology, and preceptor to the Infanta, heiress to the throne, and who afterwards, step by step, rose to be archbishop of Toledo, primate of all Spain. He entered at once, in the first session, into the reasoning of Columbus, and not only listened with attention, but took up his cause, and with the help of the other friars labored earnestly to calm the noisiest of his colleagues, and to persuade them that propriety and justice demanded that they should listen to the reasoning with serious attention."—*Tarducci's Columbus, p. 95.*

had the honor of being the guest of Alonzo de Quintanilla, and the royal treasury made occasional appropriations for him. Moreover, the sovereigns promised to give him another hearing as soon as the pressing claims of the war were over. Meanwhile, in one way or another, he rendered such aid as he could in the various campaigns.

Nor were his thoughts concerning his great project inactive, for we now find him adding an immense and wholly new conception to his scheme for the future; one which he was destined never to realize, but which was to have such great influence in determining his purposes and movements ever afterwards that the student of his biography cannot afford to lose sight of it for a single moment.

Who are those two strange looking travellers just now entering the camp? They are friars from the convent of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem. Why are they so pressing to see the King and Queen? They bring serious tidings from the Sultan of Egypt, who has already begun to retaliate the Spanish war against the Moors. He threatens, further, to kill all the Christians in his dominions, to demolish all their churches and convents, and even the Holy Sepulchre itself, if the war is not relinquished.

The sovereigns were not intimidated by these threats, but, in all probability, pushed siege and battle more vigorously. But the leaders in the army are stirred with the spirit of the crusades as the threats of the Sultan become the talk about the camp-fires; and Columbus resolves to turn to account the fabulous wealth of the Orient, which he expects soon to appropriate

He will raise an immense army, and recover the tomb of Christ from the infidel. From now till death this determination is held with a firmness of grasp that does not yield or hesitate for a moment. In his last will and testament it is a main feature.

The last week in December, 1487, Diaz returned to Lisbon from that memorable voyage in which the Cape of Good Hope was discovered. How intensely must that event have interested Christopher Columbus. Africa was surely a continent! and Prince Henry's conception of reaching the wealth of India by that route would soon be realized. This was indeed fuel to that flame which had been so long burning in Columbus's heart. Oh, for the shorter route by way of the west! When would it be possible for him to demonstrate it?

But another item of intense interest connected with this voyage is the fact that the Admiral's brother Bartholomew was a companion of Diaz in the important discovery. This is proven by a note in the Adelantado's own hand, on the margin of the Admiral's famous copy of the *Imago Mundi*, as identified by Las Casas, who was intimately acquainted with him and with his chirography. We are not surprised, therefore, to find that the Admiral at once arranged for a trip to Lisbon. On the 20th of March, 1488, King John II. granted him a safe conduct, promising him immunity from any arrest; but it was not until the fall of that year that he availed himself of it. About the middle of August, 1488, occurred the birth of his second son, Fernando. It is but natural that this anticipated event should have detained him.¹ It

¹During the Admiral's long detention about the court at Cordova he had

was probably during this interview with Bartholomew that he arranged to send him to England to appeal to Henry VII. in behalf of his plan.

In May, 1489, Columbus appears again in Cordova. During the siege of Beza, which now occurred near the close of the Moorish war, Zúñiga says he "took a glorious part, giving proof of the great valor which accompanied his wisdom and profound conceptions." Being discouraged by the slow progress of his cause at court, about Christmas of this same year he applied to the Duke of Medina Sidonia, one of the most wealthy and influential subjects in the realm, for aid, but to no effect. The appeal to the Duke of Medina Celi, which then followed, was more telling, for this noble personage entertained him at his castle for two years, and

formed an attachment to Beatrix Enriquez, a lady of noble family, but, as in the case of Filipa Perestrello, without fortune. That this connection was not sanctioned by marriage is implied by the entire absence of any record to that effect, and is explicitly stated by Las Casas, and may be inferred from Columbus's will, which reads: "I say and direct to Don Diego, my son, or to whosoever shall inherit, that he shall pay all the debts which I leave here in a memorial, in the form therein specified, and all the others which justly seem to be owed by me. And I direct him that he shall have special care for Beatrix Enriquez, the mother of Don Fernando, my son, that he shall provide for her so that she may live comfortably, like a person should for whom I have so much regard. And this shall be done for the ease of my conscience, because this has weighed heavily on my soul. The reason therefor it is not proper to mention here."

In the exaltation of Columbus as Viceroy this lady never appears as Vicequeen, nor does her son, Fernando, make any mention of her, though he particularly notices his father's marriage to the mother of Diego.

"This fact," says Tarducci, "is certainly a most unpleasant disturbance of the harmony of the blameless life of Christopher Columbus. But whoever remembers the unbridled license of the times in matters of morals, and the shamelessness of the example set by every class and condition of persons, especially by those most conspicuous by rank and dignity, will not raise too much scandal if even a virtuous and religious man was for a time defiled with that pitch."

even contemplated fitting out the caravels and the men necessary for his voyage. But how would so bold and important an adventure, on the part of one of those feudal lords whom the sovereigns had aimed so strenuously to check, be received by them? He would consult the Queen about the matter, and thus give her another occasion to consider the enterprise herself. If she would undertake it he would join her. Her reply was uncertain. But if she should assume the enterprise, she would be glad of his co-operation. This virtual promise was forgotten in after years.

In the gloomy days of autumn, in 1491, sickened at heart from hope long deferred, Columbus set out for Huelva. He would get his son Diego, take him to his other son and his mother, and find a home for them, perhaps in France or in England. Moreover, he would try to find out something as to the outcome of his brother's trip to the latter realm.

It was during this journey from Huelva to Palos that Columbus first called at the convent of La Rabida. This, as we have seen, is made clear by the testimony of Diego's lawsuit with the Crown, which Navarrete has so carefully collated.

The poetic imagination will never cease to paint the scene. This wanderer from court to court, so deep in the contemplation of undiscovered lands that he has never had time to make for himself a common competency, knocks at the door of a convent like some highway beggar, and asks for bread and water for himself and his child. The door is opened and the favor is granted, for it is but a small one, and common enough, no doubt, with this time-honored institution of good and charitable deeds.

As the humble guests partake of their simple repast, the waiter is impressed with their appearance. The worthy prior comes that way, and he also is interested. Surely these are no common wayfarers—no mere “tramps,” as we would say. That man in threadbare garments, but with noble bearing and an impressive intelligence, must be one of nature’s noblemen, with some important mission to mankind. The hair prematurely gray, the lines of thought and care on every feature, the pensive look of anxious sorrow—all speak to the kindly heart of the good prior. A conversation begins, upon which the destiny of how great a part of the world is pending!

Again Columbus has come to the right place. In the language of Mr. Knight, “surely some good angel” must have led him to Juan Perez de Marchena, who, probably more than any one else living, could at once sympathize with his deepest thoughts and purposes, and give him a truly helping hand in this crisis. This personage was something more than a mere ecclesiastic. He seems to have been learned and thoughtful beyond the attainments of his age. Having an observatory on the roof of his convent, he was accustomed to resort thither for the contemplation alike of the heavenly bodies above and of the boundless ocean in full view beyond. Probably believing in the sphericity of the earth, he had anticipated Columbus’s conception of populous realms in the western seas. Many an hour had he spent in solemn reverie as to the multitudes who might be living in far-off and mysterious lands, without the true knowledge of God. Moreover, he was possessed of those liberal sentiments and

those broad and intense sympathies which would readily identify him with the aspirations of his guest.

But no less important were the relations which Juan Perez bore to the Spanish monarchs. He had formerly been confessor to Queen Isabella, and was acquainted with some of the most influential personages about the court. His position, personal worth, and sanctity of character were all such as could give him strong influence. But he was too discreet to depend simply on his own judgment. The convent of La Rabida was about a mile and a half from Palos, a seaport, where dwelt some of the ablest mariners in Spain. They were fully awake to all discoveries recently made on the African coast, and some of them had themselves been there and to the islands to the westward. They had perhaps been the medium of the nautical interest and information in which the good prior himself shared so largely. Several of the most distinguished citizens of Palos were invited to the convent to interview the stranger. Foremost among these was Garcia Fernandez, a physician of the town, who, during the lawsuit of Diego Columbus with the Spanish crown, related the incident here given. He seems to have been a person of liberal mind and uncommon attainments, especially in respect to those sciences pertaining to navigation. Another distinguished person added to the social group was Martin Alonzo Pinzon, the chief member of a seafaring family of wealth and prestige. He soon came to have a singularly clear insight into the facts, arguments, and theories of Columbus, and sympathized with them so

deeply as to risk property, influence, and, ultimately, life itself in the great enterprise.

Here, for the first time, the views of a prophet of the New World were receiving the unprejudiced and enlightened attention which they so well deserved. Here, in a quiet and retired monastery, were those opinions and purposes forming which were soon to lead the most powerful courts and inaugurate an enterprise which must affect the destiny of nations beyond any mere secular affair in all ages, unless it be the art of printing.

Juan Perez, through an able messenger, most earnestly interceded for Columbus. Isabella replied favorably and wished to see the prior, who did not wait till the following day after receiving the intelligence, but mounted his mule and travelled after midnight, through the bleak winds of midwinter, to the royal encampment at the new town of Santa Fé.¹ Here he sought the Queen.

Many a sacred reminiscence of other days must now have arisen in her mind, and was not the good prior able to plead every point in the case? In this interview, which turned the tide of fortune in favor of Columbus, Juan Perez is said to have been seconded by Louis de Santangel, a fiscal officer of Arragon, and also by the Marchioness of Moya, an intimate friend of the Queen.

Her generous impulses were aroused, and she requested Columbus to be present again at the court. With a true instinct of benevolence she sent him a handsome sum of money that he might make his ap-

¹ This city, the name of which in English is St. Faith, was built as a seat of royalty and a general encampment during the siege of Granada.

pearance in a becoming manner. With this \$1,180.00 he bought a mule for his journey, and provided a suit of apparel. Was not success now probable? Imagine the exultation of spirits in which he set out on his journey!

Very soon after the arrival of Columbus in the vicinity of Granada a council of learned men is again called to deliberate upon this western voyage into the "vasty deep," which somehow will not stay "*put down.*" And behold, time has wrought in its favor. Even Talavera will throw some weight into the scale for the persistent adventurer. The Queen, too, is essentially convinced; but not for a moment can attention be diverted from the conquest of Granada, now supposed to be just at hand. That consummated she will give this strange thing under the sun a favorable hearing.

On January 2d, 1492, Granada surrendered, and the event may well be regarded as one of the grandest in the history of Spain. The united forces of the King and Queen have finally conquered the Moors, and Boabdil, their King, is delivering up the keys of the Alhambra, that time-honored and beautiful palace of his royal ancestors. A day of humiliation and sorrow it must have been on the part of this brave people, who for some eight hundred years had dwelt securely in the land of which their forefathers had taken possession. In what contrast with their crestfallen appearance, as they poured forth from the palace and the vanquished city, must have been the jubilant and triumphant entrance of the King and Queen of Spain, with their grand train of dukes, nobles, and cavaliers. These were days of the proudest military display. Glittering armor,

gay banners, gorgeous plumes, grand music—all ministered to the magnificence of the hour.

It was also a signal religious victory. The crescent, that hated symbol of infidelity, must now give place to the glory of the cross. Catholicism, the religion of the Christian world at that time, was to place its archbishop in Granada; and the whole world would admire the achievement as a most signal one for the Christian faith.

In this supreme moment of a nation's joy, how shall Columbus be heard? He must stand aside till the flood-tide of excitement has passed over. Meanwhile he is the guest of his firm and influential friend, Alonzo de Quintanilla, who will speak encouraging words to him. But have not the monarchs promised him an impartial hearing as soon as the war shall be over? And has not the Queen just requested his presence again at court?

By and by he is ushered in, when lo, a new perplexity arises. This obscure adventurer asks altogether too much for himself. He will be admiral of the unknown seas into which he is about to sail, will be viceroy of the realms to be discovered, and one-tenth of all the profits from trade or conquest must be his. These astounding requirements take the court by surprise. Fernando de Talavera, confessor to the Queen, now elevated to the new archbishopric of Granada, is especially chagrined, and argues his opposition to the terms most shrewdly. The honor of the crown will be compromised, he says, by yielding to such exorbitant demands on the part of an obscure and foreign adventurer. If he should succeed, he will

stand next to the throne itself, casting his immense shadow over the whole court. If he fail, as he probably will, Spain, acceding to such high demands on such slender prospects of success, will become a laughing-stock to the world. This threadbare foreigner has everything to gain and nothing to lose. The crown takes the entire risk, and almost gives away the stupendous result, should it be accomplished.

This is a shrewd putting of the case against Columbus, and, coming as it does from the Queen's ghostly adviser, will settle it against him. But will he not accept terms a little less extravagant? Various propositions are made, which are thought quite reasonable and even flattering. The monarchs are willing to pledge a great deal, but this obscure suitor, so strangely stubborn in his demands, will not yield one jot or tittle. This is a stupendous affair which he expects to accomplish; besides, he and his descendants after him must be suitably rewarded. He will in no wise belittle the grand enterprise by accepting small pay. Then, this is but a stepping-stone to what he conceives to be an infinitely greater undertaking—the raising of a vast army to rescue the tomb of Christ from the infidel. Here is an immense reach of perspective into the future—an unbounded hope. How can he accept less than the original demand? Indeed, he seems to have become rich, for he offers to furnish one-eighth of the expense of the expedition, provided he may have the same proportion of the profits, which profits must have been additional to the one-tenth first asked for. This eighth part of the expense, it is supposed, was to be obtained through the generosity

of the Pinzons, who had so cordially espoused this cause.

Neither side would yield, so, after all said and done, the negotiation was broken off. Talavera seemed to have given the finishing stroke to his scheme, as far as Spain was concerned; Columbus therefore mounted his mule and turned toward France.

We have no record of his thoughts, as he wended his way among the Andalusian mountains, toward Cordova; but we may imagine some of his sad musings. What a crushing disappointment, this! Memory passed over the events of some eighteen or twenty years since those realms beyond the "sea of darkness" first rose like a vision before him. During that time, how faithfully he had striven at different courts to secure the moderate aid he needed. He had tried to give away the new world, but no nation thought it worth while to accept it. The many years in Portugal, and the two councils called by the King, had sent a provision ship to the Cape de Verde Islands! Genoa had made light of her wool-comber's son! Seven tedious years of waiting in Spain had come to nothing! Would France treat him any better? Why was it he heard nothing from Henry VII. in England, to whom he had sent his brother Bartholomew so long ago?

But the cause is not yet lost in Spain. Great impressions have been made on great minds, and they cannot be reconciled to the loss of so grand an opportunity. He who gave voice to this stirring conviction was Louis de Santangel, treasurer of the church funds in Aragon. He, along with Alonzo de Quintanilla, went at once into the presence of the Queen, and, with

that spirit and eloquence which is born of intense emotion, he almost reproached her for lack of discernment and enterprise. As given by Fernando Columbus, his words were as follows: "He wondered to see that her Highness, who had always a great soul for all matters of moment and consequence, should now want the heart to enter upon an undertaking where so little was ventured, and which might redound so much to the glory of God and propagation of the faith, not without great benefit and honor to her kingdom and dominions, and such, in short, that if any other prince should undertake it, as the Admiral offered, the damage that would accrue to her crown was very visible, and that then she would with just cause be much blamed by her friends and servants, and reproached by her enemies, and all people would say she had well deserved that misfortune, and though she herself should never have cause to repent it, yet her successors would certainly feel the smart of it. Therefore, since the matter seemed to be grounded upon reason, and the Admiral who proposed it was a man of sense and wisdom, and demanded no other reward but what he should find, being willing to bear part of the charge, besides venturing his own person, her Highness ought not to look upon it as such an impossibility as those scholars made it, and that what they said, that it would be a reflection on her if the enterprise did not succeed as the Admiral proposed, was a folly, and he was of quite contrary opinion, rather believing they would be looked upon as generous and magnanimous princes for attempting to discover the secrets and wonders of the world as other monarchs had done, and it had redounded to their honor. But though the event

were never so uncertain, yet a considerable sum of money would be well employed in clearing such a doubt. Besides that, the Admiral only demanded 2,500 crowns to fit the fleet, and therefore she ought not to despise that undertaking, that it might not be said it was the fear of spending so small a sum that kept her back."

Such are the mere fragments, probably, of what must have been a most moving appeal. Others, too, joined in the persuasive effort, particularly that most worthy friend of the Queen, the Marchioness of Moya, and, without doubt, de Quintanilla.

Now, as never before, the grandeur of the proposed enterprise burst like a glorious vision on the imagination of the Queen. But the King did not share her conviction, so she would stand virtually alone in the undertaking. Moreover, the national finances had been exhausted by the war just closed. Her enthusiasm was sufficient, however, to overcome all obstacles. "I undertake the enterprise for my own crown of Castile, and will pledge my jewels to raise the necessary funds," she exclaimed; and this was, without doubt, the grandest resolution of her life—itself alone enough to distinguish her as the heroine of her age.

But it was not necessary for her to pledge the jewels of her crown. Santangel stood ready to advance from the ecclesiastical funds of Aragon the seventeen thousand florins necessary to the undertaking, and the loan was duly paid back out of the first gold from the New World, Ferdinand having used it to gild the royal saloon at Saragossa.

Alonzo de Quintanilla and Santangel kissed the hand of the Queen in token of their gratification over her de-

cision, and at once she despatched a messenger, who overtook Columbus on the bridge Pinos, some six miles on his way toward Cordova. He did not turn about at once, for he had learned to be cautious as to royal promises; but when all the circumstances of the Queen's new attitude were made known to him he came back to Santa Fé.

Now the sovereigns were willing to concede to him his own terms, the originals of which are still preserved.

INTRODUCTORY SENTENCE TO THE PRIVILEGES OF COLUMBUS.

“In the name of the Holy Trinity and eternal Unity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, three persons really distinct in one divine essence, which lives and reigns forever without end.”

The things prayed for and which your Highnesses give and grant to Don Christopher Columbus to reward him in some manner for what he has discovered in the ocean, and for the voyage which now, with the assistance of God, he is about to undertake to those parts for the service of your Highnesses, are the following:

First, that your Highnesses, as lords of the said ocean, may appoint from this moment the said Don Christopher Columbus to be your Admiral in all the islands and continents which through his labor and industry shall be discovered or acquired in the said ocean, during his natural life; and after his death his heirs and successors, one after the other perpetually, with all the pre-eminences and prerogatives which belong to the said office, in the same manner as Don Alphonso Enriques, your High Admiral of Castile, and the other predecessors in the said offices enjoyed them in their own districts.

It so pleases their Highnesses.

JOHN DE COLOMA.

In like manner that your Highnesses may appoint the said Don Christopher Columbus to be your viceroy and governor-general over all the said islands and continents which, as has been said, he shall

discover or shall acquire in the aforesaid seas, and that for the government of each one, and any of them, he may make choice of three persons for every office, of whom your Highnesses shall take and elect one who shall be most agreeable to you, and thus the lands which our Lord will permit us to discover and acquire for the service of your Highnesses will be better governed.

It so pleases their Highnesses.

JOHN DE COLOMA.

Item: That all and whatsoever merchandise, whether pearls, precious stones, gold, silver, drugs, and other things and merchandise whatsoever, of whatever kind, name, and manner, that shall be bought, exchanged, found, and gained, or shall be within the limits of the said admiralty, your Highnesses from this moment grant to the said Don Christopher Columbus, and will that he have and take for himself the tenth part of them, all expenses deducted that may have been incurred by it, so that of what shall remain free and net he may have and take for himself the tenth part, and dispose of it according to his pleasure, giving the other nine parts to your Highnesses.

It so pleases their Highnesses.

JOHN DE COLOMA.

In like manner that if on account of the merchandise which shall be transported into the aforesaid islands and lands which shall be acquired or discovered as has been said, or which by other merchants during this time may be transported from those parts to ours, there should arise any dispute in the place where the said traffic is held and made, he requests your Highnesses that if by the pre-eminence of his office of Admiral the cognizance of such cause should belong to him, he or his substitute, and no other judge, may take cognizance of such causes, and thus may decide from henceforward.

It so pleases their Highnesses, if it belongs to the said office of Admiral, according as Admiral Don Alphonso Enriques and his other predecessors enjoyed it in their districts, it being just.

JOHN DE COLOMA.

Item: That in all the vessels that shall be equipped for the said traffic and trade, always, where, and whatever time they are equipped,

the said Don Christopher Columbus may, if he chooses, contribute and pay the eighth part of all that is spent in equipping them, and that he may take likewise the eighth part of the profits that may result from such equipment.

It so pleases their Highnesses.

JOHN DE COLOMA.

They are granted and expedited with the answers of their Highnesses at the end of each article. In the town of Santa Fé, in the plain of Granada, the 17th day of April, in the year of the nativity of our Saviour Jesus Christ one thousand four hundred and ninety-two.

I THE KING.

I THE QUEEN.

By command of the King and of the Queen :

JOHN DE COLOMA.

Registered Talceña.

As Juan Perez and the Pinzons, the principal helpers of Columbus, were at Palos, it was but natural that this seaport should become the headquarters of the expedition. And this came about the more readily, since, by some offence to the monarchs, the town had been ordered to furnish two armed vessels for royal service for a year.¹ These might be turned over to Columbus. The royal order to this effect was duly read to the authorities and people of the town, from the porch of the church of St. George, on the 23d of May. The vessels referred to were to be ready in ten days ; and Columbus was to furnish another, according to his own proposition.

¹“In consequence of the offerce which we received at your hands, you were condemned by our council to render us the service of two caravels, armed, at your own expense, for the space of twelve months, whenever and wherever it should be our pleasure to demand the same.” So ran the requisition of the sovereigns.

But neither the royal mandate nor the promise of the pay of seamen in armed vessels four months in advance could move these sturdy sailors. Their heads were too full of terrors of the unknown seas, so commonly believed in by the unenlightened and superstitious in those days, to be led out on a voyage so uncertain and perilous. Neither could the vessels be procured. Weeks passed and nothing could be done. Even when the sovereigns send an officer to force obedience to their orders, there is but little result except a general tumult and confusion.

In this critical state of affairs the Pinzon brothers, Martín Alonzo and Vicente Yañez, both very able navigators, volunteered to enter the expedition, and offered to furnish one vessel. They had many relations, friends, and employees in the place, and were persons of strong influence; so the other two vessels were finally secured, possibly both were pressed into the service, and quite a number were persuaded to help make up the crews. But it became necessary to proclaim freedom to those civilly and criminally obnoxious to the law,¹ in case they would embark in the enterprise, in order that a sufficient number might be prevailed on to go. Indeed, some of the number, it would seem, were even compelled.² Under such circumstances everything moved on reluctantly and with difficulty. Those employed to fit out the vessels

¹ "The ship of Columbus was, therefore a refuge for criminals and run-away debtors, a cave of Adullam for the discontented and the desperate. To have to deal with such a community was not one of the least of Columbus's difficulties." *Helps. Col.*, pp. 80, 81.

² There is reason to believe that this most desperate part of the crews was quartered on the *Santa Maria*, and that the Pinzons had the better element persons who volunteered under friendly influences.

did their work badly ; and when ordered to do it over ran away. Some who had volunteered repented, and disaffected others. Some deserted and hid themselves. Nothing went smoothly and with good will.

Look now at the outfit for this unparalleled voyage. The *Santa Maria*, said to be an old vessel fitted and rigged over, is of moderate size—possibly some 60 feet long and 25 feet wide—and is the only one of the three vessels which has a complete deck. She is commanded by Columbus and contains the most motley portion of those making up the crews. The *Pinta*, with a high cabin in the rear for the officers, and also a high fore-castle for the common sailors, is called a caravel, and is sailed by Martin Alonzo Pinzon. The *Nina*—“Baby”—commanded by Vicente Yañez Pinzon, is similar, but has lateen or three-cornered sails. The entire number who embarked in these vessels, each capable of carrying about one hundred tons, was, perhaps, one hundred and twenty.

According to the date of Columbus's birth which we have accepted as probable, he would now be about forty-six years of age. If “an impenetrable cloud of obscurity” rests on his earlier years, and if, as Prescott says, “the discrepancies among the earliest authorities are such as to render hopeless any attempt to settle with precision the chronology of Columbus's movements previous to his first voyage, *one thing* is certain—*somewhere, somehow*, he had received a masterly discipline as a seaman. His skill in keeping reckoning at sea, in prognosticating the weather, and particularly in discerning the indications of nearness to land, was simply marvellous—almost superhuman. And any one who

could outride storm and tempest, amongst rocks and shoals and in mid-ocean, with such inferior and crazy ships as were some of those in which he made his voyages, must indeed have been master of his craft. The improved compass and the astrolabe, those important and wonderful instruments of his time, must have done their best service in his hands. As a nautical astronomer he was so familiar with the stars and constellations as to feel "sure and safe" anywhere in the ocean seas; for by them he could at any time determine his exact position, as if by a "prophetic vision." Whether he passed his early life in the more honorable pursuits of seamanship for his day, or whether he was trained under the French colors of piratical notoriety, the fact that he could emerge from a life of such unfavorable influences as were those of the sailor of his day even at the best, with such stores of valuable and important knowledge, such sympathy with and insight into the grandest philosophical deductions of his age, such singleness of purpose, indomitable perseverance, good tact, heroic courage, and ardent piety, would seem to be a most remarkable outcome—one of the most remarkable in all history. If he were a pirate, as some say, he was surely the most noble and useful person ever found in that class.

CHAPTER V.

THE FIRST VOYAGE ACROSS THE ATLANTIC.



ON Friday morning, the 3d of August, before the sun cast his rays across the ocean, the sails were unfurled for the distant and mysterious voyage. Never was there a more solemn embarkation. There is always a peculiar uncertainty overshadowing him who goes out upon the sea. How many a ship well rigged and manned, with a certain port in view, never returns nor is heard from again. But this voyage was unlike any other of all time. Three small vessels were putting out into unknown seas, without any definite landing place. Once and for all, a line was about to be projected from one side of the globe to the other. Ever afterwards others might follow in the wake, but this voyage could be made but once, and admitted of no parallel. All the expeditions along West Africa and all previous navigation had been mere coasting. Taking the fullest advantage of the late improvements of the compass and the astrolabe, and following out the natural consequence of that astounding doctrine in philosophy, the sphericity of the earth, this was to be the first thoroughly independent and scientific voyage. And how worthy and momentous were its results!

Columbus and his men, conscious of the perilousness of the undertaking, felt themselves overshadowed by the presence of the Infinite. The former had

confessed himself to the good prior of La Rabida and taken the communion, and the several officers and crews had followed his example. The whole community, witnessing the solemn scene, was deeply awed and in a state of mourning. Husbands, sons, friends, and neighbors were going out with scarcely a possible hope of returning. Science and natural history have done so much to make us familiar and at home in every part of the world that we can form no conception of the superstitious terrors which then prevailed in reference to the boundless unknown. Sea-serpents, mermaids, and monsters having no affinity or analogy with the systems of nature were the imagined inhabitants of the unexplored seas. The equatorial region was a belt of impassable heat, where the very ocean boiled beneath the vertical rays of the sun. The sphericity of the earth would admit of sailing away down hill to any extent, but to return up grade against wind and wave would be impossible. Scarcely less perilous were the clouds above. Not the "albatross" of the "ancient mariner," but the great "rock," a bird so gigantic as to seize a ship in his talons and bear it away to the clouds to gobble up its men, and breaking it in pieces drop the fragments on the waves below, was one of the terrors of the untried waste of waters.

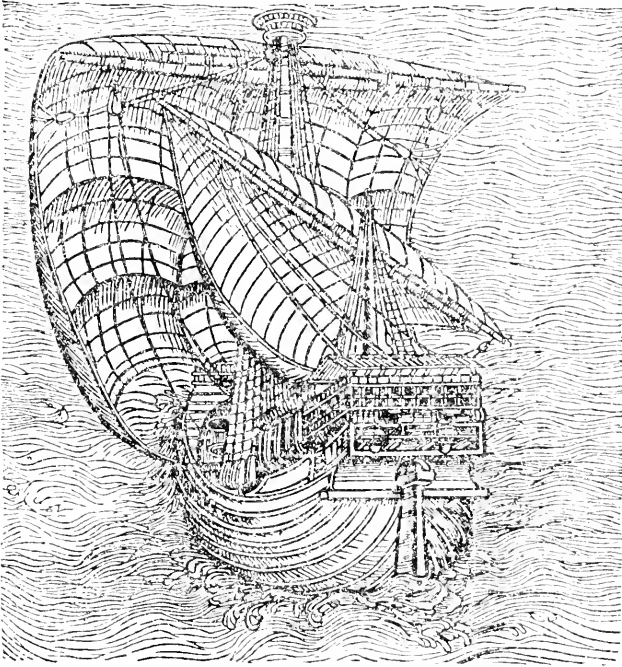
Maps and charts of those times filled up the unknown parts of the ocean with hideous monstrosities of the imagination; and the Mohammedans, whose religion would not admit of such idolatrous art, imaged a huge black hand in the horizon.

Toscanelli placed the Canary Islands in the same latitudinal line with Antilla and Cipango, on the way to

India ; and as Columbus sailed essentially by his map sent to him in 1474, he went first to those islands to get his starting point westward.

Peter Martyr adds that he went to the Canary Islands "to the intent there to refresh his ships with fresh water and fuel before he committed himself to this so laborious a voyage."

Nothing of importance occurred on this part of the route except that the *Pinta's* rudder gave way. This



is supposed to have been no mere accident, but a trick on the part of the owners, the vessel having probably been pressed into service. The captain, Martin Alonzo

Pinzon, being an ingenious and experienced seaman, twice secured the rudder by cords, and the craft reached the Canaries in safety the 9th of August. But this incident made Columbus uneasy, and he made a thorough effort to get another vessel at these islands; but after spending three weeks to no purpose the *Pinta* was careened in order to have her leaks stopped, and furnished with a new rudder; and the lateen sails of the *Nina* having been replaced by square ones the squadron sailed on its way on the 6th of September.

More than a month had passed since the little fleet left Palos. Quite a detention this must have been to the anxious Admiral; but the time was not altogether lost, for the stories of land to the westward, with which the atmosphere of these islands abounded, must have done something to brace up the courage of his unwilling crews.

They were, however, in an intense state of excitement. Almost anything out of the ordinary way filled them with alarm. The streaming fires from the majestic peak of Teneriffe, one of the Canaries, had affrighted some of the more ignorant; but after Columbus's explanation of the volcanic forces they were pacified. All went well now till the last point of land faded from the horizon, and there was nothing in sight but "the fruition of the heaven and the water." Then the magnitude and fearful uncertainty of the undertaking startled their wild and untutored fancies. They imagined they should never see land again, and the near prospect of death in the "sea of darkness" overwhelmed them. These emotional spirits of a southern clime burst into tears, and some even broke out into loud lamentations.

Now Columbus's brilliant imagination and eloquent tongue stood him in good stead. He drew a most vivid picture of Marco Polo's kingdoms of the Orient, and promised them great rewards if they would persevere to the end. Had he landed in the empires of Tartary instead of in the New World of savages and undeveloped resources he would no doubt have been but too happy in making all these promises good.

These poor ignorant sailors were soothed for a time, but the undercurrent of intense fear continued, and their paroxysms could at any moment be brought on by the slightest untoward incident. And they steered badly, causing the vessel to fall to leeward, toward the north-east, for which the Admiral reprimanded them repeatedly.

Columbus, expecting to find some of his isles of India just about where the Great Antilles are, had such a definite notion as to where he should reach land that he gave orders to the vessels to lay by, in case of separation, from midnight till daylight, after they had sailed seven hundred leagues, for they might then confidently expect to find land.

Here, also, occurred that precaution on his part which has been so severely censured by some of his critics. He must have been keenly sensible of the fact that, excepting a few of the officers, he had not the hearts of the men who sailed with him. They had either been overpersuaded or literally pressed into the service. They were, moreover, for the most part, a very crude and excitable people, with heads much too thick to accommodate the clear and luminous notions of the Admiral. The danger of mutiny was imminent every hour, and Columbus

would have been obtuse, indeed, had he not realized his peril. Hence it was that he kept a double log or record of the distance passed over; the one, exact, for his own private use, the other diminished carefully each day for general inspection, in order that the crews might not know how far they were from home. In view of the fact that, in cases of emergency amounting to necessity, casuists and moral philosophers of all time have justified instances of deception, and considering the moral crudeness of the age in which Columbus lived, it would not only be uncharitable, but even unjust, to stigmatize him as deceitful because of the few instances of this kind which occurred during his life.

Others, again, have ridiculed the possibility of such an advantage being taken, believing the pilots and navigators of his crews to have been capable of detecting any such ruse. But let it be remembered how incomplete the method of reckoning was in those days. The eye noted the speed of the ship, and the distance per hour being estimated, the hour-glass afforded the multiple. And in how many instances of difference of opinion between Columbus and his men he proved in the end to be correct. Hence the confidence reposed in his superior nautical skill was altogether remarkable. Then, too, his open figures of the distance passed over were greater than those of the pilots of the vessels.

Tuesday, September 11th, they saw a large fragment of the mast of a vessel, apparently of 120 tons, but could not pick it up.

On the 13th, for the first time in the history of that newly-improved instrument, certain peculiar variations in the needle of the compass were observed. After

pointing several degrees to the northeast of the polar star it gradually moved westward to the line of no variation, and then beyond to the westward. This was a sufficient cause of alarm to the sailors. Must they not now be in some part of the world where the ordinary laws of nature did not operate, and where the forces to be met could not be calculated?¹

Columbus cast about for an explanation. He told his pilots that the magnetic needle did not point directly to the polar star, but to some point in its vicinity, around which that body itself described a circle. This hypothesis quieted their fears, and in course of time satisfied Columbus himself.

On the 14th the men on the *Nina* saw a tropical bird which they did not think ever went more than twenty leagues from land.

Imagine the intense interest with which the changes in sea and sky must have been noted by every observing person in the crews! On the night of the 14th of September a flaming meteor went streaming through the star-lit heavens, and dropped into the sea only a few miles distant. In that clear atmosphere of the tropics, and on the immense unbroken expanse of waters, such a phenomenon would have been striking enough to any one, but to the affrighted imaginations of these men this trailing flame, burning for twelve or fifteen seconds, was simply terrific. Again it was necessary for the philosophic resources of Columbus to be taxed for an explanation.

The vessels were now sailing directly in the current

¹ In after years Columbus thought that a study of this variation of the magnetic needle might afford a ready way for ascertaining longitude, the line of no variation being a meridian line.

of the trade-winds, which, including a belt of several degrees, follows the sun from east to west. This interesting and important fact in nature was not yet known, and it seemed strange and alarming that they should have no variation whatever in the wind. Would it forever drive them away from home, and never change, so as to make their return possible? Columbus, however, was all confidence. Having no sympathy whatever with these fears, he was simply enjoying the amenity of nature, as the wind abaft was wafting them over a quiet sea, without the necessity of changing a sail for many days. On the 16th, occasional showers rendered the air yet more salubrious; and to the keen senses of our seaman there wanted only the song of the nightingale to make the balmy days and nights like those in Andalusia.

The next thing which attracted their attention was the immense tracts of sea-weeds, or Saragossa Sea, into which they suddenly came. Here, too, they saw some tunny fishes¹; and Columbus picked up a live crab. As their vessels ploughed through the weeds, some of the timid sailors almost looked for the tree-tops of sunken islands; but Columbus, ever ready with some analogy found in the ancient classics, now recalled Aristotle's account of the ships from Cadiz, which, sailing along by the straits of Gibraltar, were driven a long way west by a violent east wind, and encountered immense fields of weeds, among which they saw many tunny fishes. It could not be possible that they

¹ The tunny fish is a huge species of mackerel. This was no doubt the tunny of Europe, attaining a length of 15 to 20 feet, and sometimes weighing 1,000 pounds, a food-fish which these sailors must have met previously in the Mediterranean.

had yet reached India ; but these weeds must have been torn by the storms from rocks and river-banks, and they were no doubt approaching some of the various islands which Toscanelli had laid down on his map as lying *en route* to Mangi and Cathay. How complete was the delusion of our hero as to the nearness of the shores of Eastern Asia !

About this time several species of birds were seen ; but the accounts are so imperfect as to make it impossible to identify them. The *alcatraz*, now flying about the vessels, must have been a species of gull ; and the *rabo de junco*, with long feathers in the centre of the tail, called rush-tail by the Spaniards and straw-tail by the French, was probably the elegant tropic-bird—possibly a species of skua. As to the land-birds which they thought spent part of the night on board ship about the 20th, they must have been mistaken, for they were now about midway from the Canaries to the West Indies.

Again they had reached clear water, and the ships were crowding all sail. The steady wind was carrying them along swiftly over a sea as smooth as glass, and every eye was on the alert, hoping to gain the annual pension of ten thousand maravedis which the sovereigns had promised to him who should first see land. The *Pinta*, being the swiftest sailor, kept ahead. Clouds of birds were flying toward the north, and Martin Alonzo Pinzon thought he saw land in that direction, but Columbus kept steadily to the west, believing, as heretofore, that land was surely to be found in that course.

On the 22d the wind was from the west, and the

ships were obliged to tack to the northwest. This cheered Columbus, and he wrote in his journal: "This wind was very necessary to me, for my crew had grown much alarmed, dreading that they never should meet in these seas with a fair wind to return to Spain."

By and by the wind nearly died away, and the uneasy crew began to gather in knots, and to discuss the necessity of turning back. They had come far enough to test the wild notion of land in the west; the cook was reporting the provisions as fully half consumed; the vessels were beginning to show the effects of the long voyage; the chances of being able to reach home were slender enough now; what hope of return would they have if they still continued the mad voyage? As to Columbus, he was a mere visionary, his head so turned with his wild notion that he set no value on his life anyway. But they need not be over particular about him. He had but few friends and not a few enemies. They might push him overboard, and say he fell into the sea while indulging his constant habit of gazing at the stars. No one would lay the matter to heart or ask close questions about him; and they would be looked upon as heroes, who, having explored the wide ocean, had settled the fact that land was not to be found to the westward.

The Admiral overheard their mutterings and noticed their "black looks;" but he resolved to be firm and risk his life if necessary. "The sea was calm because they were approaching land," he said. "Did they not notice the many flights of birds and other signs of landfall?" Again he would remind them of the displeasure of the sovereigns and the punishment due them if they hindered the voyage.

But on the 25th of September the wind favored them again, and, as there is "nothing like a freshening breeze," a better spirit prevailed. The vessels sailed close together, so closely that Columbus and Martin Alonzo Pinzon chatted familiarly, and the latter tossed to the former a chart loaned him some days before, and now secured by a cord as it passed from one vessel to the other. "According to this map," said Martin Alonzo, "we should now be near Cipango and the other islands near it." "That is quite possible," said Columbus, "but, on the other hand, the ships may have been turned somewhat from their proper course by the strong currents so apparent, or the pilots may be mistaken in their reckoning, and we may not have sailed so far as they report."

Now Columbus and his officers on the *Santa Maria* gather about the map, and try to make out their exact present position in the ocean; and soon they are startled by a shout from the *Pinta*, "Land! Land! Señor, I claim my reward!" cried Martin Alonzo Pinzon, from the high stern of his vessel, and pointing to the southwest, where there was indeed the appearance of land in the distance. Columbus fell upon his knees and devoutly thanked God. Martin Alonzo as devoutly repeated the *Gloria in excelsis*, the several crews within the range of his voice joining in solemn concert.

Now every heart beat with joyful expectation. The sailors scrambled to the mast-head and clung about the rigging, straining their eyes for a glimpse of the supposed land. Throughout the night Columbus stood the ships in that direction, but the morning

revealed nothing save the wild stretch of the ocean. They had been allured by a deceptive evening cloud. Again they sailed westward.

But this delusion seems to have done the sailors good. They are decidedly cheerful, and as the weather is mild and the sea delightfully tranquil for several days, they amuse themselves by jumping overboard and swimming abreast the ships. Schools of dolphins raise their backs out of the waters, and there is an abundance of flying-fishes, "which are about a span long, and have two little wings like a bat; they fly about a pike high from the water, and a musket-shot in length, more or less, and sometimes they drop upon the ships." Here, too, they see schools of fishes with "gilt backs," some of which they catch. Are not the flights of various birds also increasing? The elegant tropic-birds, the jagers chasing the pelicans and gulls and forcing them to disgorge their food, are all species which do not go more than twenty leagues from land. Signs of land increase and every one feels happy. Every now and then the cry of "land" is heard, until the false report becomes demoralizing, and it is necessary for the Admiral to affirm that, if any one's announcement does not prove true after three days' sailing, he shall forfeit the reward, even though he may afterwards sight land first. But the *Nina*, sailing ahead, becomes assured. On Sunday morning, October 7th, at sunrise, she hoists a flag and fires a gun in signal of *land*; but again all signs fail.

A general depression now steals over the crews, and even Martin Alonso Pinzon begins to doubt whether they are sailing in the right direction.

They had now sailed, according to Columbus's private reckoning some 707 leagues. His open figures were 584; his pilot's, 578; the reckoning of the *Nina*, two days later, was 540 leagues; that of the *Pinta*, 634. All knew that they had sailed a great distance, but just as the crews were becoming desperate the small land-birds began to fly in clouds to the southwest. This was a sure sign of land. Had not the Portuguese been constantly guided by the flight of land-birds in discovering the islands off the west coast of Africa? These birds are going southwest to spend the night, or are migrating for the winter. Columbus, on the evening of this same Sunday, bent his course to the southwest, thus conforming to the bird-omen, and at the same time gratifying his men.

And the small land-birds continue to fly, many of them bright and beautiful in color. Some alight familiarly about the rigging of the ships, and one can hear their notes as they pass over at night. Even the heron, the pelican, and the duck which they see, all fly in the same southwestward course, and the Admiral's keen sense of smell seems to detect the fragrance of breezes from off the land.

Notwithstanding all these signs of landfall, on the evening of the third day of sailing in this direction, as the sun sank into a "shoreless ocean," there began to be a universal clamor to put about the ships and return home.

Columbus attempted to reason with the discontents, but finding it useless he became peremptory, and declared that as the sovereigns had sent them out to find land, and as the signs of land were constantly

multiplying, they would not return until they had fulfilled their mission. The notion that he compromised with them, and promised to return if they did not find land in three days, is not in accordance with the evidences in the case, and has been discarded by every competent critic.

Thick and fast now come the facts in support of Columbus. Fresh-water *algæ* appeared, and a kind of green fish keeping about rocks in rivers. Who could discredit that fresh branch of thorn ornamented with bright red berries?—or that green rush floating by?—or that bit of board?—or that staff so skilfully carved? As these welcome objects were picked up from the waters, and passed around among the admiring crews, no one any longer doubted; and every one was on a sharp lookout for the much-desired land.

Impressive indeed must have been that memorable evening of October 11th, before the landfall. A fresh breeze was wafting the vessels swiftly over a tranquil sea, and the evening sky was bright above them. As usual, the sailors had sung their evening hymn to the Virgin. Then Columbus addressed his crew. His whole being was deeply moved, and he spoke like one intensely conscious of some great event just at hand. He was assured that the momentous achievement for which his whole life had been a struggle was within a few hours of its consummation. Every fibre of his being must have vibrated to his words, as he reminded those about him of the smooth sea over which, in the providence of God, they had sailed with a favoring breeze for so many days; of the many signs of land which had cheered their hopes in time of depression;

of his expectation, on leaving the Canaries, of finding land when they should have sailed westward seven hundred leagues. He believed they would sight land that night, and promised a velvet doublet as an additional reward to that promised by the monarchs to him who should first announce the landfall.

Throughout the day there was a heavier sea than they had seen in all the voyage, and they had sailed more rapidly than usual; and now, as the night settled down upon them, the vessels were still speeding their course through the swelling waves at an unwonted rate, the *Pinta* leading the way. A delightful animation prevailed. Every eye was on the alert. Columbus had seated himself on the lofty cabin at the stern of his vessel. No one slept that night. Every bosom swelled with an unbounded expectation. A new world was just at hand! What sort of a world would it be?

About ten o'clock Columbus thought he saw a light. He called one of his principal men, Pedro Gutierrez, and he also thought he saw it. He then called a second person, Rodrigo Sanchez, who, after a time, was equally fortunate. The light rose and fell, like a torch in a boat tossed upon the water. Evidently the gleam of this distant luminary was faint, and made certain, or perhaps barely probable, by the observations of the three.

At two o'clock in the morning the *Pinta* fired a gun in signal of land. Rodrigo de Treana was the fortunate observer whose eye first detected the almost even outline of an island along the horizon, about two leagues distant. There is no friend of Columbus but will re-

gret that he should afterwards have accepted the reward as adjudged to himself, simply because he saw a light. Who would not sympathize with this poor sailor, not only for the loss of his ten thousand maravedis and velvet doublet, but for the loss of that honorable distinction which his watchfulness and good-luck so richly deserved? It is said he was so chagrined that he forsook his country and his religion and, going into Africa, turned Mussulman.

This time there could be no mistake. There lay the long, level, forest-clad island, its silvery lights and dark shadows made clear by the large moon standing high overhead.

They cast their anchors. "All sails were furled, leaving only the stormsail, which is the square sail without bonnets, and they lay hove-to, awaiting the day." (*Columbus.*)

"When I regard this achievement," says Castelar, "the most living, evident, and effulgent lesson it bears is the triumph of faith. To cross the seas of life, naught suffices save the bark of faith. In that bark the undoubting Columbus set sail, and at his journey's end found a new world. Had that world not then existed, God would have created it in the solitude of the Atlantic, if to no other end than to reward the faith and the constancy of that great man."

CHAPTER VI.

THE FIRST LANDING.



NO one loitered on this bright morning of the 12th of October. In the gray dawn, the natives, watching from the shore, could see the ships—gigantic phantoms in their eyes. Then they beheld the boat manned and nearing the shore. At the command of Columbus, the crews had all been regularly attired for the occasion. The leading personages, at least, were probably clad in armor of glistening steel; while he, standing in the bow of the long boat, and giving to the morning breeze the flag of Castile, wore, in addition, some scarf or drapery of bright scarlet. The Pinzons bore “the two flags of the green cross, which the Admiral carried on all the ships as signals, having an F and a Y, and above each letter a crown, one on one side of the cross and the other on the other.” Bright Castilian plumes waved, and much of the details of dress was in the brilliant colors of the age. Quite unlike the still paddle of the Indian’s canoe was the united plash of the double row of long oars.

They reached the shore in that most delightful part of a bright day—at sunrise. Gorgeous must have been the tints of that early hour in the tropics. The tall, majestic trees were clad in an exuberant foliage, the most novel and strikingly varied in form. The humid atmosphere was laden with grateful odors. The

happy birds were giving their matin song. Columbus, whose senses are said to have been remarkably acute, and who possessed the brilliant imagination and high sensibility of the poet, would not only comprehend the grand scene, but would invest it with the varied charms of his own bright fancy. It was perhaps the supreme moment of his life. A happier hour he could scarcely have known than when he stepped on the shores of that new world which his imagination had so long beheld in the distance.

When he landed he fell on his knees, then forward upon his face, kissed the earth, returned thanks to God, and, with tears of joy, offered the following prayer: "Lord God, eternal and omnipotent, by thy sacred word the heavens, the earth, and the sea were created; blessed and glorified be thy name, praised be thy majesty, which is exalted through thy humble servant, in that by him thy sacred name may be made known and declared in this remote part of the earth."¹

In this solemn act of devotion he was cordially joined by the whole company. Rising to his feet, he drew his sword and planted the standard of Castile, thus taking possession of the new country in the name of the sovereigns of Spain. In accordance with the pious emotions of the hour, San Salvador, or Holy Saviour,² was announced as the name of this island, which the natives called Guanahani.

¹ By order of the sovereigns of Spain, this same prayer was afterwards used by Balboa, Cortez, and Pizarro in their discoveries.

² Following the oldest maps and the description by Columbus, it becomes clear that Walling's Island and not the present San Salvador is Guanahani, on which the great discoverer first landed. See R. H. Major's *Select Letters on Columbus*, pp. 60, 61, Introduction. See also Becker's *Landfall of Columbus and Cronau's Amerika*.

The several crews, with their officers, now gathered about him somewhat in the order of rank. Near him stood the Pinzon brothers, his associate captains, each holding a banner of the green cross,¹ having on one side the letter F, and on the other side the letter Y, to represent Fernando and Ysabel. Bright golden crowns surmounted or in some way ornamented these beautiful standards. Other officers found their places according to their importance and rank. All now gave the oath of allegiance to Columbus as admiral and viceroy of the new country.

The scene which now followed must have been at once amusing and gratifying to those who sympathized with the Admiral. The craven souls who had shown disrespect and even malice toward him were now all suddenly turned about. Pressing upon him on every side, some embracing him, some kissing his hands, some kneeling at his feet, they acknowledged their faults, and begged his pardon. Some, impressed with his dignity and authority, which all had just acknowledged, asked to be remembered in respect to such favors as he in his high position might be able to confer.

During the ceremonies, Herrera says, a great multitude of the natives were looking on, and that the Admiral, believing them to be "a gentle and simple people, and seeing them stand gazing on the Christians, astonished at their beards, white faces, and clothes, gave them some red caps, glass beads, and

¹ It is difficult to tell from the original account whether this is a banner with a green cross, or a green banner in the shape of a cross. I think it was the latter.

such like things, which they highly valued; the Spaniards no less admiring those people, their mien and shape."

Probably no man was ever more disappointed than was Columbus in the character of the people whom he found in this new country. His imagination had teemed with the brilliant conceptions of oriental life—costly apparel, ornaments of gold and precious stones, palatial residences and splendid appointments in general, but here were only naked savages, tattooed and painted in the most hideous styles, and living in wigwams, or at most in mere huts and hovels. Nothing could be further removed from the supposed luxuries of India than the simple and destitute manner of life among these aborigines.

And yet there was something fascinating in their native strength and beauty and in their simple ways. Their stalwart and well-rounded forms, their bold features, bright eyes, and exuberant black hair, and their clear brown complexion when not spoiled with paint, were all exceedingly impressive. Not a few of these people were really beautiful. And, having a fair conception of that grand triad of human knowledge—the personality of God, the immortality of the soul, and moral accountability—they were by no means a low order of savage. Then, this innocent nakedness, dwelling in booths, feeding upon the simple and spontaneous products of nature, and almost having everything in common, was it not precisely that life of happy ease and freedom from care which poets, philosophers, and artists love to depict? Columbus, supposing that he was in some of the ruder outskirts of

India, called these people Indians, and, as nothing sticks like a name, they are called so to this day, though for hundreds of years the world has known Columbus's mistake.

When the Spaniards and the Indians met, the latter were, of course, even more astounded than the former, for they were taken entirely by surprise. That huge sailing craft, gliding so majestically over the water as its canvas was swelled by the breeze, was something for which they had no name, and which they supposed came from some other world. The white men's beards which they stroked and examined so curiously—the Indians had no beards—and their white skins, surely were not of this world. Then the superior intelligence and grace of culture, which some at least of these strangers manifested, could but confirm their notion that these wonderful people had come down from heaven. "They cried with loud voices: 'Come and see the men who have come from heaven. Bring them victuals and drink.'"¹ Would that they might never have had occasion to change their opinion!

At first the natives fled away in fear, as the boats approached the shore; but, after gazing on the strangers cautiously at a distance, they somehow gained confidence, and gradually approached them. They were harmless, gentle creatures. The few that carried bows and arrows, or wooden lances with the points hardened in the fire or tipped with a bit of flint or the

¹ "The idea that the white men came down from heaven was universally entertained by the inhabitants of the New World. When, in the course of subsequent voyages, the Spaniards conversed with the Cacique Nicaragua, he inquired how they came down from the skies, whether flying, or whether they descended on the clouds."—*Irving* from *Herrera*.

tooth or bones of a fish, were not disposed to use these weapons. They had no iron implements of any kind, and evidently were not practised in warfare. Columbus was impressed with their simplicity when, on handing them a sword, they grasped it by the edge and cut themselves. How excited they were when Columbus opened up his treasures—gay caps, bright colored glass beads, little tinkling bells, such as those devoted to falconry put on their hawks. He had learned the importance of such trifles from the experiences of the Portuguese on the coasts of Africa. Nothing takes the eye of a savage like bright colors, and those tiny bells were perhaps the nearest approach to a musical instrument they had ever heard. How their eyes sparkled with delight as they put the beads around their necks, and how gleefully they skipped about when they jingled the bells!

The news soon spread. At the early dawn of the next morning the natives came in crowds, and were so eager to get to the ships that some of them, plunging into the water, swam out to the Spaniards; but most of them came in their canoes, hollowed out from a single tree in the form of a tray, some of which held fifty persons. "They rowed with an oar like a baker's peel, and wonderfully swift." In the great rush of the crowd some of these canoes were upset; but the owners swam like fishes, and in a few minutes had righted them, bailed them out with their calabashes, and were paddling along again, without the inconvenience of wet clothes.

True to the nature of the savage, they all wanted gew-gaws and ornaments. They had not come to beg,

however, but to buy. If their articles of exchange were few in number, they were all the more liberal with them as to quantity. They brought tamed parrots in great numbers, immense balls of cotton yarn, and bread called cassava,¹ made from a root which they cultivated. As they had no conception of comparative values, they gave great quantities of their commodities for a few trifles.

What kind of ornaments are those which some of these savages wear in their noses? Ah, that is gold! Nothing could more inflame the breasts of these Spaniards than gold! So the hawk's bells and other trinkets were freely exchanged for this precious metal, on which the natives seemed to set but little value.

All this bartering was carried on at a great inconvenience, for the parties could communicate only by signs. As gold was the one thing above all others wanted in Spain, Columbus pressed the natives to make known where they obtained it. They pointed to the southwest. They also gave him the impression that there was land in the northwest, whence the people came to the southwest for gold. These vague communications could readily be misconstrued by the Admiral's vivid imagination. He felt assured that he must be in the rich country which Marco Polo had described; and a certain king which the Indians represented as living in a house, the roof of which was covered with plates of gold, he believed to be the Grand Khan of Tartary.

Having explored the island and become satisfied

¹ A bread very ingeniously made from the yucca root, from which is also derived our *tapioca*.

that it was not in all respects suitable for a colony, he left on the evening of the 14th, taking seven natives as guides. As they thread their way through this labyrinth of tropical islands, everything is strikingly novel and strongly characterized. The immense trees are enshrouded in the densest foliage; exuberant vines drape and festoon them in various directions; flowers of every form and hue decorate the landscape; the abundance of fruit is of almost endless diversity and flavor; there is an astonishing variety of birds of the most brilliant plumage, and some of them are charming in song; the crystal waters teem with fishes, the sparkling scales of which vie with the birds in almost every tint of the rainbow; and the air is laden with such an aromatic fragrance as cannot fail to convince Columbus that he is in that oriental country "where the spices grow."

As the ships glide along over the smooth waters, the natives name the islands till they mount up into the hundreds, and "Columbus now had no longer a doubt that he was among the islands described by Marco Polo as studding the vast sea of Chin, or China, and lying at a great distance from the mainland. These, according to the Venetian, amounted to between seven and eight thousand, and abounded with drugs and spices and odoriferous trees, together with gold and silver and many other precious objects of commerce.¹

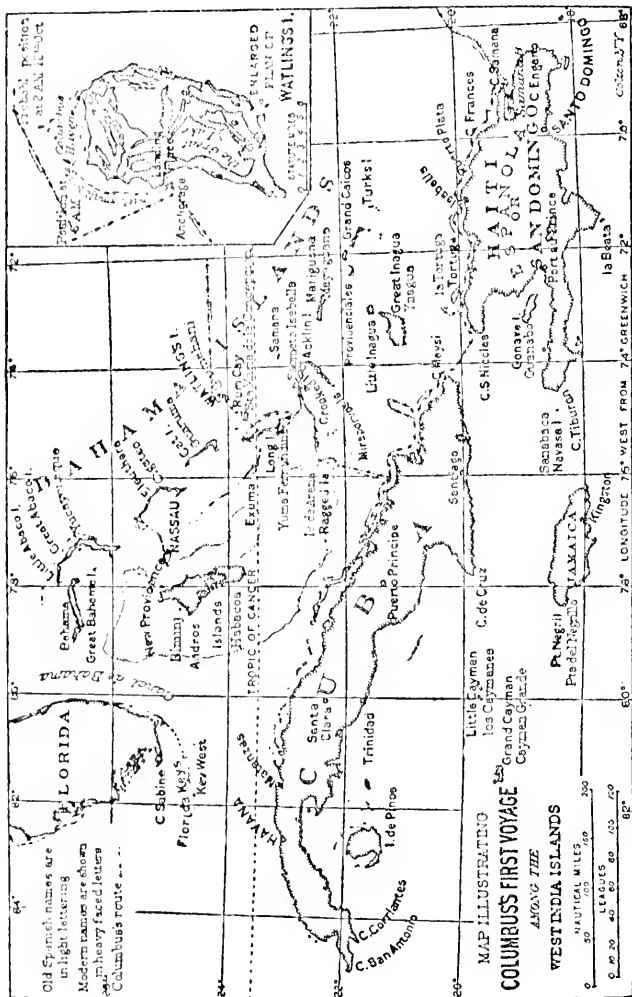
On Monday, October 15th, the ships are under sail towards an island some six or seven leagues distant, "that part of it toward San Salvador extending from

¹ Irving's Columbus, vol. 1, p. 173.

N. to S. five leagues." The other side ran from E. to W. more than ten leagues. Now they sail for a still larger island to the W., which the Admiral names *Santa Maria de la Concepcion*. "About sunset we anchored near the cape which terminates the island towards the W. to inquire for gold, for the natives we had taken from San Salvador told me that the people here wore golden bracelets upon their arms and legs. I believe pretty confidently that they had invented this story in order to find means to escape from us."¹ Here the ships remained till the next day, the Admiral examining the island and taking possession of it. "A large canoe being near the caravel *Nina*, one of the San Salvador natives leaped overboard and swam to her (another had made his escape the night before); the canoe being reached by the fugitive, the natives rowed for the land too swiftly to be overtaken; having landed, some of my men went ashore in pursuit of them, when they abandoned the canoe and fled with precipitation; the canoe which they had left was brought on board the *Nina*, where from another quarter had arrived a small canoe with a single man, who came to barter some cotton; some of the sailors, finding him unwilling to go on board the vessel, jumped into the sea and took him. I was upon the quarter-deck of my ship, and, seeing the whole, sent for him and gave him a red cap, put some glass beads upon his arms, and two hawk's bells upon his ears. I then ordered his canoe to be returned to him, and dispatched him back to land."

¹ The quotations occurring along this part of the narrative are from the Journal of Columbus.

Tuesday, October 16th, about noon, the squadron set sail for an island which loomed up very large in



the west. But their sails were so poorly filled that they had not yet reached harbor when night overtook

them. Midway they had met a man in a canoe. His outfit for a voyage among these islands was exceedingly small—a bit of cassava bread “as big as one’s fist, a calabash of water, a quantity of reddish earth,” used as body-paint, and a few dried leaves which these natives seemed to value. He had also a little basket in which were some glass beads and two Spanish copper coins, thus betraying the fact that he was from San Salvador, probably going from island to island to carry the news of the arrival of the strangers from heaven, and to show the presents they gave. The Admiral ordered the bold seaman, with his canoe and goods, to be taken on board, where he served him with “bread, honey, and drink.” As the ships approached the large island for which they were making, the Indian, with his effects, was launched in his canoe. This kind treatment, Columbus thought, would conciliate the natives. They approached the island just at night, and, as the coast was dangerous, beat up and down till morning, when they anchored at a village. The Indian messenger, having landed here, had given the inhabitants so good an impression that all night long they were coming out in great numbers in their canoes to the approaching ships, bringing water and other things. Each one received some present, “as strings of ten or a dozen glass beads, plates of brass, such as cost in Castile a maravedi apiece, and thongs of leather. Those who came on board were fed with molasses.”

In the gray dawn of the morning a delegation went ashore for water. The kindly natives not only directed them to the springs, but “carried the little tubs

to fill the pipes.”¹ These natives attracted the attention of the Spaniards as being shrewder in traffic than those they had met before. How the Spaniards ache to get the gold ornament, half as big as a *castellano* and with letters on it, from the nose of that native. Surely that must be a coin! But the fellow will not part with it. These natives are also more modest in covering their nakedness than has been the custom in these parts. The ships spend some time coasting this island and Columbus lands, and is delighted with its great fertility and the novel and striking beauty of every object about him. He is especially delighted with the fishes, “of the finest hues in the world, blue, yellow, red, and every other color, some variegated with a thousand different tints, so beautiful that no one on beholding them could fail to express the highest wonder and admiration.” This island was named Fernandina, in honor of the King.

On the morning of the 19th the Admiral sailed to the southeast for the island Saomote, which he named Isabella. Columbus says, “It lies westerly from the island of Fernandina, and the coast extends from the islet twelve leagues west to a cape which I called *Cabo Hermoso*—Cape Beautiful—it being a beautiful round headland, with a bold shore free from shoals. Part of the shore is rocky, but the rest of it, like most of the coast here, a sandy beach. Here we anchored till morning. This island is the most beautiful that I have yet seen; the trees in great number, flourishing and lofty; the land is higher than the other islands, and exhibits an eminence which, though

¹ Herrera's History of America, vol. 1, chap. 13.

it cannot be called a mountain, yet adds beauty to its appearance, and gives an indication of streams of water in the interior." He adds further, "This is so beautiful a place, as well as the neighboring regions, that I know not in which course to proceed first; my eyes are never tired with viewing such delightful verdure, and of a species so new and dissimilar to that of our country, and I have no doubt there are trees and herbs here which would be of great value in Spain, as dyeing materials, medicines, spices, etc., but I am mortified that I have no acquaintance with them. Upon our arrival here we experienced the most sweet and delightful odor from the flowers or trees of the island." And again, concerning the same island, he says, "Groves of lofty and flourishing trees are abundant, as also large lakes, surrounded and overhung by the foliage in a most enchanting manner. Everything looked as green as in April in Andalusia. The melody of the birds was so exquisite that one was never willing to part from the spot, and the flocks of parrots obscured the heavens. The diversity in the appearance of the feathered tribe from those of our country is extremely curious."

In giving these citations from the Admiral's journal as preserved by Las Casas we are tempted to quote him a little further. "While we were in search of some good water," he says of his sojourn in Isabella, "we came upon a village of the natives about half a league from the place where the ships lay; the inhabitants, on discovering us, abandoned their houses and took to flight, carrying off their goods to the mountain. I ordered that nothing which they had left should be

taken, not even the value of a pin. Presently we saw several of the natives advancing toward our party, and one of them came up to us, to whom we gave some hawk's bells and glass beads, with which he was delighted. We asked him, in return, for water, and after I had gone on board the ship the natives came down to the shore with their calabashes full, and showed great pleasure in presenting us with it. I ordered more glass beads to be given them, and they promised to return the next day. It is my wish to fill all the water-casks of the ships at this place, which being executed I shall depart immediately, if the weather serve, and sail round the island, till I succeed in meeting with the king, in order to see if I can acquire any of the gold which I hear he possesses. Afterwards I shall set sail to another very large island which I believe to be Cipango, according to the indication I receive from the Indians on board."

There is a strange lack of quadrupeds in these islands. What can be the origin of that dog which guards the pavilion of the native, but cannot bark? If he is a hunter, that little animal which the natives call *ulia*, and which the Spaniards are at a loss to name, not knowing whether to call it a large rat, a rabbit, or a coney, must be its only game. But lizards abound, and a kind of reptile which the natives eat with great relish, but which the Spaniards look upon with disgust, as being allied to serpents.

The natives still pointed southwest, as the direction in which to find the rich king and the mines of gold. So on the ships went in that direction, through sunshine and frequent showers, till they came in sight of Cuba, on the 28th.

All travellers testify to the magnificence of this island as seen in the distance, especially when approached from the north. Everything beautiful and grand in nature seems to combine here. Lofty mountains lift their blue peaks into the clouds; their spurs, like great buttresses, are clad in the most luxuriant forests, and run out in grand promontories to the sea; the wide plains which border the beautiful rivers are elysian in their mild scenery and great fertility; the large shells, strewn along the coast, the birds, the flowers, the insects sparkling like jewels, and even the fishes—all vie with each other to give brilliancy and the most entrancing effect to this immense stretch of land, which almost claims to be a continent.

As the ships bore down upon the land, the grand scene filled the heart of Columbus with unutterable delight¹. Surely this must be the far-famed island, Cipango! In those mountains yonder would be the

¹“Fancy, without whose aid no truly great work can succeed in the hands of man, lent a peculiar charm to the delineations of nature sketched by Columbus and Vespucci.”—*Humboldt's Cosmos*.

The same author, speaking of the expansion of knowledge and the growth of poetic feeling which became so obvious in literature after the discovery of the New World, notes how Columbus “described the earth and the new heaven opened to his eyes with a beauty and simplicity of expression which can only be adequately appreciated by those who are conversant with the ancient vigor of the language in the period in which he wrote. The physiognomy and forms of vegetation; the impenetrable thickets of the forests, in which one can scarcely distinguish the stems to which the several blossoms and leaves belong; the wild luxuriance of the flowering soil along the humid shores, and the rose-colored flamingoes which, fishing at early dawn at the mouth of the rivers, impart animation to the scenery—all in turn arrested the attention of the old mariner as he sailed along the shores of Cuba, between the small Lucayan islands and the Jardillos, which I too have visited. Each newly-discovered land seems to him more beautiful than the one last described, and he deplores his inability to find words in which to express the sweet impressions awakened in his mind.”

mines of gold; that tropical vegetation would afford spices, and along the shores would be the pearls of the Orient. As they landed and examined an Indian village, the pavilion-like houses, made of palm branches and located here and there on pretty eminences, under large trees, seemed more architectural than any they had seen. And how clean they were!

Those wooden statues and masks, so ingeniously wrought, did they not indicate some fair degree of civilization? Those fishing implements made of bone must show some enterprise in fishing, to supply *the cities in the interior*. And was there not the skull of a cow?—now supposed to have been that of a sea-calf or manatee.

“The natives on board my vessel point to the interior, to Cubanican, and say there is an abundance of gold there,” said Martin Alonzo Pinzon. “Moreover, they say that this is not an island, but the mainland. Cubanican must be Cublai Khan, the great sovereign of Tartary, described by Marco Polo.”

“Aye, truly,” replies Columbus. “Then we are not in Cipango, but on the mainland of India, in the vicinity of Mangi and Cathay.”

As heretofore, the natives pressed upon the Spaniards with their huge balls of coarse cotton yarn, parrots, and cassava bread; but Columbus forbade all traffic except for gold, hoping thus to develop the facts concerning that metal in the country. Nowhere, however, in the crowds who called on him could he detect any of the precious metals, except one silver ring in the nose of a native. He was questioned, and gave the impression that the king lived about four days' journey inland.

There was no time to lose. At once two Spaniards were chosen as delegates to the court of the monarch—probably Kublai Khan. One of them was a convert from among the lately banished Jews, who could use the Hebrew and Chaldaic languages, and even the Arabic. Might not this oriental potentate be able to communicate through one or the other of these? Two Indians acted as guides. This embassy was instructed to present the letter of salutation¹ which the Spanish sovereigns had sent, and to inform the monarch that they had sent the Admiral to establish friendly relations between their distant kingdoms.

In order to be as thorough as possible in this dispatch, Columbus made out a list of names of Asiatic provinces, harbors, and rivers, as given by Marco Polo and others, concerning which they were to make inquiries as to distance, situation, etc. They were also supplied with samples of certain oriental spices and drugs, in order to ascertain whether they grew in that country.

To all these important inquiries the Admiral expected answers in full in six days. O Marco Polo! what an impression thou hast made!

Meanwhile all the crews were active; part were

¹ This letter read as follows :

“Ferdinand and Isabella to King ——— :

“The sovereigns have heard that he and his subjects entertain great love for them and for Spain. They are, moreover, informed that he and his subjects very much wish to hear news from Spain; and send, therefore, their Admiral, Ch. Columbus, who will tell them that they are in good health and perfect prosperity.

“Granada, April 30th, 1492.”—*Helps, Col.*, p. 79.

The same author says: “This crediting the unknown ruler with an anxiety for the welfare of the Spanish sovereigns is really a delicious piece of diplomatic affectation.”

careening and repairing the vessels, and part went in search of cinnamon, nutmegs, and rhubarb. As Columbus continued to examine the natives, a great variety of information was elicited. When he showed them gold ornaments and pearls, they knew of a country where these were worn on the necks, arms, and ankles. They also told of nations who had but one eye, of others who had heads like dogs, and of others who cut the throats of their prisoners and drank their blood; all of which was no doubt equally authentic.

What strong, sweet odor is that arising in the smoke, as the calkers on the vessels heat their tar over the fire? Surely that is the precious mastic, such as is found in the Grecian Archipelago; and, as the trees which are being burnt grow abundantly everywhere around, Columbus conjectures that "a thousand quintals of this precious gum might be gathered every year."

Well, mastic or no mastic, here is something important. That group of natives yonder also have a fire and, irrespective of any odor, are turning it to practical account. What are those longish tubers which they are baking in the embers, and which they eat with such relish while they are yet steaming hot? Ah! that will prove to be something of more value to the world than *all the wealth of the Indies*; it is the *potato*!—no mere ornament or luxury, but food—bread which the poor man can produce from his little patch of ground in less than a hundred days, and make ready for his table without the aid of a mill.

Here come the ambassadors! In *less* than six days they have accomplished their mission. All crowd

around to hear what they have to tell about Kublai Khan. Alas! after travelling some twelve leagues, they have found, as usual, only a community of naked savages. It was unusually large, indeed, containing some fifty houses, more capacious than those near the sea, and having a population of about a thousand; but there was neither gold nor pearls; and when they showed their cinnamon and pepper, the inhabitants said these did not grow with them, but pointed, as usual, *to the southwest*.

Fernando Columbus says that when the embassy reached this Indian community "the principal men of the place came out to meet them, and led them by the arms to their town, giving them one of those great houses to lodge in, where they made them sit down upon seats made of one piece, in strange shapes, and almost like some creature that had short legs, and the tail lifted up to lean against, which is as broad as the seat for the convenience of leaning, with a head before, and the eyes and ears of gold. These seats they call *duchi*, where, the Christians being seated, all the Indians sat in a circle around them on the ground, and then came one by one to examine and kiss their hands and feet, believing they came from heaven; and they gave them some boiled roots to eat, not unlike chestnuts in taste, earnestly entreating them to stay there among them, or at least to rest themselves five or six days, because the two Indians they took with them gave those people an excellent character of the Christians. Soon after, many women coming in to see them, the men went out, and these, with no less respect, kissed their feet and hands, offering them what they brought." He also

says, concerning the same tour, "they saw vast quantities of cotton well spun, in balls, in so much that in one house only they saw above 12,500 pounds of it. The plants it comes from are not set, but grow naturally about the fields, like roses, and open of themselves when they are ripe, but not all at the same time, for upon one and the same plant they had seen a little young bud, another open, and a third coming ripe."

The Spaniards "might have been attended back by more than five hundred men and women, who were eager to bear them company, thinking they were returning to heaven. They took none along with them but one of the principal inhabitants, with his son." (*Columbus's journal.*)

The embassy had seen a number of cozy little villages with gardens in which was cultivated a kind of sweet pepper, a sort of bean, yucca for cassava bread, potatoes, and that wonderful product which has so extensively fed both man and beast ever since—maize, or Indian corn. With whatever curiosity and interest they may have examined this beautiful product—*this gigantic species of grass*—they could have formed no conception of the immense want it was to supply throughout the world.

They also found another product, which was to tell heavily on the habits of the world. They had seen the natives roll up the large, dried leaves of a certain weed, and putting one end of the compacted cylindrical-shaped mass in the mouth and holding a firebrand to the other, draw the smoke into their mouths and puff it out again! This use of the "*tobacco*," as the Indian called his huge cigar, was looked upon by the Spaniards

as the most nauseous habit they had yet seen among the savages.

Disappointed in not finding the oriental monarch, nor yet gold mines, nor pearls, nor palaces roofed with gold, in these parts, Columbus resolved to go in search of the island Babeque, to which the natives had now transferred all their royal and golden mysteries.¹ The vessels sailed southeast along the coast. After several days, in which he saw no populous towns, nor anything else corresponding to his oriental notions, he sailed eastward toward an island in sight, which he thought might be the one referred to; but strong head-winds obliged him to put back to the shores of Cuba. Again he put out, and, after several days of useless effort, was under necessity of returning. But as he gave signal for the other vessels to follow him, the *Pinta*, some distance in advance, gave no attention. As night came on, he put the lights at the mast-head; but, though the wind was so favorable to the Admiral's course, no regard was paid to these. The morning dawned and no sail was in sight.

For a while at least, Martin Alonzo Pinzon had determined to part company with Columbus. At this the latter was greatly disturbed. Pinzon had been one of his best friends, and had done more than any one else in securing the vessels and the crews. Others had given him sympathy and counsel, but he had given him his purse. His company, as an experienced and bold navigator, was of incalculable importance. But it was not an easy matter for one so prominent in

¹Las Casas thinks two days farther sail to the northwest would have brought him in sight of Florida.

the enterprise and so accustomed to command to submit to another who was a comparative stranger to himself and to his nation. Perhaps, in the few variances which had occurred between him and the Admiral, he had blamed him too severely. Very possibly the latter was not always as amiable and considerate towards his colleague as he might have been. We do not know and cannot judge. Whatever the extenuations might be, Pinzon should have been subordinate and faithful to the Admiral, according to his voluntary agreement under his sovereigns.¹ Nor does it seem probable that Columbus could have been guilty of any great misdemeanor towards his associate, for in the lawsuit with the Crown, introduced by Diego Columbus after his father's death, and in which the Pinzons took ample occasion to show their unfriendliness toward the Columbus family, there is no mention of anything of the kind.

Barring his desertion by Pinzon and his failure to find Kublai Khan, the Admiral's voyage along this north side of Cuba had been one continued delectation. Broad, deep rivers studded with magnificent islands, fertile plains shaded by the strangest and most delightful trees of astonishing size, lofty mountains bearing gigantic pines and suggestive of the most picturesque and artistic landscapes, fragrant flowers and luscious fruits, and an endless variety of birds in plumage and song the most charming—all entranced him both day and night; so that, in describing these new scenes to

¹ In connection with this painful incident, Las Casas quotes from Columbus's journal concerning Pinzon: "He has, by language and actions, occasioned me many other troubles."

the sovereigns, the symbolism of language utterly fails to mirror his perceptions. Only the experience of seeing could sufficiently magnify one's conceptions of such marvellous parts of our earth.

Babeque, that mysterious land of golden dreams, is now the one point of interest in the wide ocean. The Admiral therefore sails eastward, according to the direction of the natives. Presently, in the south, there arises out of the sea a most enchanting landscape. Quite a distance along the horizon the rocky crest of majestic mountains is strongly outlined against the sky. Anon long slopes and wide plateaus of the most exuberant tropical forest emerge. As they approach still closer, there are broad savannahs, and fertile valleys bordering rivers clear as crystal. The vegetable and animal life is the same brilliant display of birds and flowers and elysian fruits as they have found elsewhere in these delightful regions of perpetual summer. This island, some four hundred miles in length and about one hundred and fifty miles in greatest breadth, is Hayti, than which there is not a more beautiful nor more unfortunate spot on earth. Evidently it was once the home of an immense community of happy human beings, who, in the midst of nature's greatest plenty, without care and almost without effort, lived a life of simplicity and fair morality; who were conscious of the plainest joys and truest affections, without the burdens and ambitions of civilization. But the story of those lives is prehistoric. When civilized man planted his foot on fair Hayti's shores, misery and bloodshed began; and from that day to this it has scarcely known permanent peace or prosperity.

On December 6th the vessels entered a harbor on the western end of the island, which Columbus called St. Nicholas. The shores of the smooth waters of this broad harbor were overshadowed by the most magnificent and fruitful trees. Here the royal palm spread its immense fronds, and the banana displayed at once its elegant tubular blossoms and its great clusters of fruit. A wide plain stretched away into the mountains, and on the river running through it a number of the canoes of the natives were seen. Columns of smoke arose here and there, and at night fires gleamed thickly in the forests. Evidently the island was well peopled.

The Spaniards continued their course along the north side of the island. Here and there among the hills or mountain spurs were charming valleys, some of which appeared to be highly cultivated. In the clear waters there was a great variety and abundance of fishes, some of which leaped into the boats. When they drew their nets, which were burdened with vast numbers of them, they found some which resembled certain species in Spain. Throughout the day and even at night the birds were singing, some of them almost repeating the bird-songs of their own country. One of them reminded them strikingly of the nightingale. In fact, in many respects there was something in this island strongly suggestive of the more beautiful parts of Southern Spain, hence Columbus named it *Hispaniola*.

But where were the natives? On landing and making excursions inland they could find their houses, their gardens, traces of their roads, and the ashes and embers of their recent fires; but the people had evidently fled at the sight of the ships. While Columbus, after his

usual custom, was erecting a huge cross and taking possession of the country for Spain with proper formalities, some of his men, rambling about the neighborhood, caught sight of a vast throng of natives, who immediately fled in terror. The sailors gave chase, but found their sea-legs too clumsy to overtake the fleet-footed Indians. One young woman or girl, however, who either could not keep up with the rest, or loitered behind out of womanly curiosity, was captured and borne away to the ships.

As they arrived with this naked beauty on their shoulders, Columbus was not very well assured as to the civilized wealth of the island, but that ring of gold in her nose was suggestive. The precious metal must be somewhere in those mountains or in the sands of the rivers, as the natives had said. If the girl was at all terrified by these new scenes, she was soon soothed by the kindness of the Admiral. He had her dressed,¹ and decked out with beads, brass rings, and little bells, and when he was about to send her to her native forest, accompanied by some of his men and several native guides, she was not at all anxious to go, but would have preferred to share the fortunes of the few Indian women whom Columbus already had on board his ships. The men who escorted this female into the forest would gladly have shown the utmost gallantry by taking her all the way to her home, but it was night, and they could not conjecture how they might be received by the savages; so she was obliged to go part way alone, while the escort returned.

¹Herrera says: "The Admiral gave her hawk's bells, strings of glass beads, and caused a shirt to be put upon her."

What a curiosity this young female, so grandly apparelled, must have been to her people. One may almost imagine that no one slept in the town that night, but that all stayed up to hear her wonderful accounts of the strange sights she had seen. A visitation of angels from heaven could scarcely surprise us more than these white men did the Indians. Columbus knew how to take proper advantage of this incident. The next morning he sent a delegation of nine of his best men, well armed, to find the community to which this young woman belonged. About thirteen miles inland, in a fertile valley and on the banks of a beautiful river, they found a large town of the natives, comprising about one thousand houses; but every one had fled at their approach. A Cuban interpreter hurried after and overtook them. How highly he extolled these white men! They were good men, he said, who came from heaven and went about the world making fine presents. By this means the vast crowd of some two thousand was conciliated, and approached the strangers. See them come with slow, hesitating steps, every now and then standing still and putting their hands on their heads as an act of profound reverence!

Presently there comes another large company, the young female, shirted, ringed, and beaded, borne on the shoulders of two men in front. She is the object of admiration to all, and her husband gesticulates enthusiastically, and in every possible way expresses his gratitude for the presents she has received.

The Spaniards are impressed with the appearance of these natives as being more finely formed, of fairer

complexion, and more pleasing in countenance than any they have yet seen. The kind-hearted beings seem now completely won, and invite their heavenly visitants to their houses, where they set before them the usual cassava-bread, also fish, roots, and the finest varieties of their luscious fruits. It was a gala-day. The air was mild and balmy as on a spring day in Southern Spain; the birds seemed in full song—surely there could be no winter in this part of the world!

The unbounded hospitality which the white men enjoyed everywhere among the Indians was characteristic of this people. Whatever any one had seemed free to all without the asking. Any one might enter the simple dwelling of another and take what he wished as freely as if it had been his own. This universal liberality was, no doubt, in part the result of the spontaneous abundance of that tropical country in which they lived, and in part the advantage of a simple mode of living. They realized to the fullest extent Goldsmith's famous adage:

“ Man wants but little here below,
Nor wants that little long.”

We can scarcely afford to pass by the illustrious paragraph so often quoted from Peter Martyr, an Italian scholar and author at the court of Spain in those days. “It is certain,” he says, “that the land among these people is as common as the sun and water; and that ‘mine and thine,’ the seeds of all mischief, have no place with them. They are content with so little, that, in so large a country, they have rather superfluity than scarceness; so that they seem to live in the

golden world without toil, living in open gardens, not intrenched with dykes, divided with hedges, or defended with walls. They deal truly one with another, without laws, without books, and without judges. They take him for an evil and mischievous man who taketh pleasure in doing hurt to another; and albeit they delight not in superfluities, yet they make provision for the increase of such roots whereof they make their bread, contented with such simple diet, whereby health is preserved and disease avoided."

This surely is a pretty picture of human life. The material for it was, no doubt, derived by Martyr from Columbus himself, with whom he seems to have been intimate; and we hope it is true to the once free and happy existence of a most unfortunate people. "All concur," says Irving, "in representing the life of these islanders as approaching to the golden state of poetical felicity; living under the absolute but patriarchal and easy rule of their caciques, free from pride, with few wants, an abundant country, a happily tempered climate, and a natural disposition to careless and indolent enjoyment."

CHAPTER VII.

THE SHIPWRECK AND THE FORT.



THE Admiral was loth to give up his fancied island, Babeque ; so he made another detour in the vicinity of Hayti, and to a certain island abounding in turtles he gave the name Tortugas. Here he saw a valley so beautiful that he called it the Vale of Paradise, and named a broad and tranquil stream the Guadalquiver. Putting back to Hayti, he found a solitary Indian in a canoe on a rough sea near midnight. The hero, along with his frail bark, was taken on board ship ; and, having been feasted and set out in European finery, was put ashore in a good harbor when they reached the island.

The constant repetition of such conciliatory acts on the part of Columbus called forth a most cordial response from the hearts of these savages, so that he wrote to Santangel as follows : “ True it is, that after they felt confidence, and lost their fear of us, they were so liberal with what they possessed that it would not be believed by those who had not seen it. If anything was asked of them, they never said no, but rather gave it cheerfully, and showed as much amity as if they gave their very hearts ; and, whether the thing were of value or of little price, they were content with whatever was given in return. * * * In all these islands it appears to me that the men are all content with one wife, but they give twenty to their chieftain or king. The women seem to work more

than the men, and I have not been able to understand whether they possess individual property; but rather think that whatever one has all the rest share, especially in all articles of provision."

The presents made to the hero-Indian put ashore had the desired effect. Very soon the coast was lined with natives; and their king, a young man of twenty-one perhaps, was with them. One of the Admiral's captive interpreters undertook to explain to him who these strangers were. They had come from heaven, he said, and were going to Babeque to find gold! At the same time, he handed the cacique a present. Not at all struck with the incongruity of these heavenly beings so intent on a gold hunt, but more under the gratifying influence of his present, the chieftain pointed his finger in a certain direction, saying that two days' sail that way would take him where there was plenty. He then produced a thin plate of the precious metal, about as big as his hand, and, cutting it in pieces, bartered it for trinkets. Some of his subjects, who had rude ornaments of gold in their noses and ears, readily traded these in like manner. Of what value were these bits of plain yellow to them, compared with bits of sparkling glass and fragments of painted dishes!

The young potentate now took leave, promising to come the next day with more gold; he assured them, however, that there was more of this metal in Tortugas than in his island. The next day, the 18th, there was no wind, so the Spaniards occupied themselves in decking out their ships and firing their guns in memory of the annunciation of the blessed Virgin; and also

awaited the return of the young cacique with the promised gold.

In due time the latter arrived, borne on a litter or sort of palanquin on the shoulders of his men, in true oriental style, two hundred of his subjects accompanying him. With an air of perfect ease, he took his seat by the side of the Admiral, who was just in the midst of his dinner. His two venerable counsellors, who almost worshipped him, sat at his feet; the rest of his followers stood without. The food offered to him he merely tasted, then passed it on to his subjects. Meanwhile he uttered but few words, and was very dignified.

After dinner the Admiral and the young chief exchanged presents. The latter gave a belt finely ornamented and two pieces of gold; and, as he looked very admiringly on a piece of rich cloth constituting the bed-hangings of the former, that was taken down and presented to him, along with some amber beads, a pair of red shoes, and a bottle of perfume. Columbus, displaying a piece of Spanish money with the heads of the monarchs stamped on it, some royal banners, and the standard of the cross, endeavored to convey some idea of his country and his religion, but the young chieftain referred all these things to some other world. He could not conceive of them as belonging to earth.

At night he left in great state, his presents borne before him, a son of his being carried after him, on the shoulders of one of the most honorable men; a brother went a-foot, "led by the arms by two honorable men, the large concourse following, and the Spanish guns firing a salute in honor of this display of uncivilized royalty.

“This day,” writes the Admiral, “little gold was obtained, but an old man indicated that at a distance of a hundred leagues or more were some islands where much gold could be found, and in some it was so plentiful that it was collected and bolted with sieves, then melted and beaten into divers forms. One of the islands was said to be all gold.”

No biography of Columbus gives any adequate representation of the vast numbers of natives which thronged him all along this northwest coast of Hayti on his first voyage. The shores and harbors teemed with canoes; many hundreds who had no canoes swam out for miles to the ships. Men, women, and little children vied with each other in bringing all the kinds of food and other objects of value which they could command; and, making every kind of sign and demonstration of cordiality to these beings whom they hailed as from heaven, begged them to abide with them. The men, the ships, the European wares and trinkets, even to the merest sliver of a painted dish or a bit of leather strap, was worth, in their eyes, all the cotton or gold they could command.¹ Fearing that this great generosity might be imposed upon by his greedy crews when they went ashore to communicate with the natives, Columbus sometimes sent a party along to oversee the bartering, and prevent any robbery of the natives.

Whence comes that large, stately canoe, highly ornamented, and loaded down with such fine-appearing natives? That is an embassy from Guacanagari, the grand cacique of these parts. An officer from his court presents another belt—a broad one, profusely

¹ See the Journal of Columbus as preserved by Las Casas.

ornamented with colored beads and bones ; also a sort of figure-head, with eyes, nose, and tongue of gold. The ambassadors are not very readily understood by the interpreters, this being the first new dialect they have met, but the message from the grand cacique evidently is exceedingly cordial. He wishes the ships to keep on to the eastward till they come in front of his residence ; then Columbus must call on him. But the wind is unfavorable, so the Admiral sends a delegation to convey his compliments to the chief, and to say that he will call as soon as possible. His residence is in a large town, well built for that country, and located on a river. The embassy is received with great honor on the public square, swept and made ready for the occasion. After each has been presented with a sort of dress made of cotton, the refreshments are brought on after the usual manner. If the natives see that the Spaniards covet anything, they readily give it to them, not being willing to receive anything in return. When they can be prevailed on to accept an article, it is looked upon as a most sacred memento.

As the chief cannot prevail on the strangers to stay over night, he gives them parrots and some bits of gold for the Admiral, and sends men to escort them to their boats and carry their presents. Thus ended the 22d of December.

Meanwhile Columbus continued to be called on by great numbers, all of whom extolled the wealth of the island. Cibao, in the interior, they said, abounded in gold, so that the chief of that mountainous region had banners worked out of the precious metal. Now, as usual, the Admiral's oriental fancies were at work.

Cibao must be Cipango; and the cacique with gold banners must be its great prince, described by Marco Polo. These rumors, however, were at least founded on fact; for here was the best region of gold-mines found in those parts.

Before sunrise on the 24th the vessels weighed anchor and steered to the eastward, according to the invitation of Guacanagari. The wind from off the land was but slight, so that the vessels made slow progress, the sails often flapping in the uncertain puffs of air, now from one point and then from another.

“Eternal vigilance” and the most self-sacrificing personal attention was one of the marked characteristics of Columbus as a successful mariner. But as he had been on the keenest alert for two days and had not slept the night before, and the sea was now “calm as water in a dish,” to use his own words, and his delegation, just returned, had reported an entire absence of rocks or shoals along the coast, he lay down to sleep, leaving the helm to an experienced and, as he no doubt thought, trustworthy seaman. He, too, soon retired, leaving his charge to a boy. This was “contrary to the express orders of the Admiral, who had, throughout the voyage, forbidden, in calm or storm, the helm to be intrusted to a boy.” Indeed, all hands seem to have gone soundly to sleep; and the ship, being left to the currents, which run like imperceptible rivers past these islands, was carried onto a sandbar, or shoal. The keel grates on the bottom, and the inexperienced boy at the helm is aroused from his dreams, and cries out with alarm. Columbus is the first on deck; then comes the master of the ship,

then others, till all hands, many of them scarcely half awake, are alarmed at the situation, the breakers roaring loudly enough to be heard several miles away.

The Admiral orders the master of the ship to lower the boat and warp the vessel off; but he in his cowardly fright rows away to the caravel, a distance of a mile or more. The commander of the caravel reproves him for his reprehensible conduct, mans his own boat, and hastens to the relief of the *Santa Maria*. But the ship is lost. In vain her masts had been cut away and part of the lading thrown overboard to lighten her. The currents had forced her keel firmly into the sand, and as she was old and almost rotten she soon sprang a leak, and was forced over on her side by the breakers. The crew was taken on board of the *Nina*, and a delegation sent to the chief to report the disaster. As there might be other shoals in the vicinity, the caravel lay to until the morning.

Now there occurred a demonstration of humane sentiment on the part of this savage chieftain and his people which would do credit to any civilized community of modern times. When Guacanagari heard of the calamity which had befallen the strangers, he wept, and immediately ordered all his people out, with their canoes, to render every possible aid. He himself came also, and, organizing a sort of police force, of which he was the head, all the goods were removed from the shipwreck and guarded in safety till he could vacate several of his largest houses to shelter them. Though there was so much that was valuable and curious which these savages might have coveted, nothing was stolen; and such was the care in handling

that scarcely anything to the "value of a pin" was injured. Sir Arthur Helps quaintly says, "The wreckers' trade might flourish in Cornwall, but, like other crimes of civilization, it was unknown in St. Domingo."

In the midst of the hurry and bustle to and fro, the chief would every now and then send some member of his family to comfort the Admiral, assuring him that everything he had was at his command. "The people, as well as the king," says Columbus, "shed tears in abundance."

All that day the removal of the ship's goods went on, and all the next night the friendly savages stood guard. No wonder Columbus wrote in his journal, "So loving, so tractable, so peaceable are these people, that I swear to your majesties there is not in the world a better nation, nor a better land. They love their neighbors as themselves, and their discourse is ever sweet and gentle, and accompanied with a smile; and though it is true that they are naked, yet their manners are decorous and praiseworthy."

After the shipwreck, Columbus and his men were crowded on board the *Nina*. Guacanagari called on him and, seeing how depressed he was, shed tears of sympathy, and assured him, as he had often done before, that he would do all in his power to aid him. "While the Admiral was conversing with him, a canoe arrived from another place, with Indians bringing pieces of gold which they wanted to exchange for hawk's bells, these being held in special value among them; before the canoe reached the vessel, the Indians called out, showing the gold, and crying *chug, chug*,¹

¹Take, Take.

for the hawk's bells, and seemed ready to go mad after them; the other canoes setting off, they requested the Admiral to preserve a hawk's bell for them, and they would bring him in return four pieces of gold as big as his head.¹ When the chieftain saw the countenance of the Admiral light up at these tidings, he assured him that there was a place in the mountains where this metal was abundant, and he could get him all he wanted. Thus we see that the gold-bearing rocks of Cibao, and those mountain streams in which gold was to be found mingled with the sand, sometimes in great nuggets, was well known.

After the cacique had dined with the Admiral, he urged him to come and eat with him. The meal prepared was as sumptuous as could be procured. The coney-like animal called the *utia* was served, various kinds of savory fishes, roots, and the most luscious fruits. This primitive banquet in the wilderness, among savages, was a study to the Spaniards. How sympathizing and cheerful Guacanagari was, doing everything possible to please his guest and divert his mind from his misfortune. How delicately and abstemiously he ate, washing his hands when done, and rubbing them with odoriferous herbs. How gentle and dignified was his bearing. How kindly he treated his subjects, who almost worshipped him.

When the feast was over, the cacique, dressed up in his shirt and gloves which the Admiral had just given him, conducted the Spaniards out into his beautiful groves, where they met about a thousand of his naked subjects, all ready to divert the strangers with their

¹ Columbus's journal by Las Casas.

amusing games. These wood-nymphs performed their wild dances, accompanied by their wierd songs and the beating of a kind of rude drum made from the trunk of a hollow tree. Some of them had the little hawk's bells, brought by the Spaniards, strung about them, and as these tinkled and jingled to their enthusiastic movements they were almost frantic with delight. It must have been a truly novel and animated scene!

When the Indians had done their best to drive melancholy from the mind of Columbus, he thought it was his turn to do something to divert them. Now was the time to impress them with the military power of the white men; so he first brought out his Moorish bows and quivers of arrows, which some of his men had learned to use in the wars of Granada. When the chief saw how exactly these huge arrows would hit the mark as they went whizzing through the air, he was astonished at their force. His enemies, the Caribs, who made raids on his island and stole his people, also had bows and arrows, he said. Aye, but Columbus told him he had other kinds of weapons much more terrible than these, with which he would drive the Caribs away. So he ordered out an arquebus, a large gun supported by a rest, and also a heavy cannon. At the stunning report of these, the natives fell to the ground as if they themselves had been shot. When they recovered from the shock and rose up, they were terrified at the sight of the trees, all shivered and splintered. This was the thunder and the lightning which these strangers from heaven could command! Surely they could protect them from their dreaded enemies, the Caribs!

Again the order of things was changed. The feast and the entertainment being over, the time was come to make presents. The cacique gave the Admiral a wooden mask ingeniously carved, the eyes, ears, and other parts being heavily ornamented with gold. He also hung plates of gold about his neck, and put a rude crown of gold upon his head. He then made presents to others of the Spaniards in the most munificent manner.

Various presents were made by Columbus and his men in return. We hope they were in some way equal to the valuable items they received. However trifling some of their gifts may have been, the Indians were perfectly fascinated with the merest trinkets, smelling of them—they seemed to have tested everything, even to gold, by the sense of smell—and calling them *turcy*—that is, from heaven. A bit of rusty iron or a fragment of leather was invested with a charm. Las Casas, the friend and apostle of the Indians, relates an amusing incident of one of them who brought a half handful of gold-dust for a hawk's bell, that most favorite toy, and was so impressed with the idea that he had the best of the bargain, that he ran like a deer into the woods, every now and then looking behind him, lest the white men, repenting of their side of the trade, should pursue him.

All in all, there had been so much gold brought in, and so much had been said by the natives about the gold to be found in the mountains of Cibao, in the interior, that Columbus concluded this to be the place to found a colony. Then his men were so elated with the easy life in so voluptuous a climate that they dreaded

the discipline on board ship and the crowded condition in which they would have to be, returning to Spain in one small vessel. Columbus, therefore, conceived the plan of building a fort out of the timbers of the wrecked ship, and arming it with her guns. All were enthusiastic over this scheme, even the Indians, who thought it would be an admirable defence against their enemies, the Caribs. Between the Spaniards and the natives, the work went on so energetically that the fort, called La Navidad, or the Nativity, from the time of year in which the wreck occurred, was completed in ten days.

During this time of anxiety on the part of Columbus concerning the desertion of the *Pinta* and the danger of taking so many back to Spain in one small, crazy vessel, he must have been greatly diverted and comforted by Guacanagari, who appropriated to his use the largest house in the place, carpeted with palm-leaves and furnished with stools made of some dark wood like ebony. Scarcely ever did the Admiral come on shore without receiving some valuable present. The cacique told him he wished he could cover him all over with gold before he went away, or rather that he would not go at all. Once his benefactor called on him with five subordinate caciques, each bringing a crown of gold. They escorted him to the house above referred to, and seated him on one of the stools. Then Guacanagari took the crown of gold from his own head and put it on the head of Columbus. How natural that the latter, moved by such affectionate liberality, should take an elegant collar made of beads from his own neck and put it around the neck of the chief, clothe him in his own mantle of beautiful scarlet cloth, put colored boots

on his feet and a large silver ring on his hand. This last present was of more value than gold to the Indians, for they had no silver in Hayti. While this feast was in progress an Indian called to say that he had seen the *Pinta* in a harbor to the eastward two days previous. A canoe was dispatched, but it did not succeed in finding the absconding vessel.

Columbus now had fabulous conceptions of the wealth of this island, and began to look upon all the circumstances which brought about his shipwreck as a special providence; otherwise he would not have been detained long enough to discover its immense resources, which he believed would be sufficient to enable the sovereigns of Spain to undertake the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre in three years. By the time he returned from Spain those whom he would leave in the fort would be able to collect a ton of gold, besides the spices and other precious articles they might accumulate. How sanguine and visionary was our hero!

The fort, a huge wooden tower, built over a vault surrounded by a ditch, mounted with the guns from the wrecked ship and well supplied with ammunition, would overawe the natives and keep his men under discipline. These latter were so well pleased with the life thus anticipated that he came near having to return alone to Spain. Precisely how many he left in the fortress was for some time uncertain, as the early accounts differ; but Navarrete found a pay-list due the relatives, in which the forty names constituting the garrison were given. One of these was an Irishman and another an Englishman. Diago de Arana, a cousin of Beatrix and a person of distinction in the armament, was made com-

mander. The long boat of the *Santa Maria* was left for their convenience; also articles for traffic, bread and wine for more than a year, and seeds for a plantation. Such artisans as might be needed were also carefully appointed to remain.

If these men had taken heed to the excellent address the Admiral gave them before his departure, no doubt all would have been well with them; but his charge—that they should obey the officers, keep closely together, remember the kindness of Guacanagari and his people; be wise, just, and peaceable in their intercourse with the natives, and, above all, to be chaste in their conduct with the native females—was wholly ignored as soon as Columbus had departed. Hence the terrible disasters which followed.

The 2d of January, the day before the appointment for departure, arrived, and Columbus went on shore to take formal leave of the Indians. Some order or ceremony, so to speak, was desirable. In the house set apart for him he spread a feast in true European magnificence, during which he cordially commended the men he was about to leave behind to the kindly offices of the cacique. He would soon be back again from Spain, he said; then he would bring an abundance of such articles and jewels as they had not yet seen.

What could be more appropriate at such a time than a mock-fight by his men? So he ordered out the lances, cross-bows, swords, arquebuses, and cannon, the men appearing in quite a military array. The skilful manœuvres with gleaming swords and bucklers, as the men rushed forward in attack and then fell back in regular order, with the clang of swords and lances on

helmet and buckler, gave great animation to the scene. The natives were astonished at the execution of these implements of war; and when the cannon sent a shot through the hull of the wreck lying in the harbor, and also shattered the forests, they looked with trembling fear on the clouds of smoke which rolled up over the waters and beyond the tree-tops. But if this suggested any cloud to the mind it was one with a silver edge. If the power of these white men was as grand as the mightiest forces of nature, all the better; they could the more readily defend them against the cruel Caribs.

When Guacanagari saw the Admiral making ready to depart, he was much distressed. One of the Indians told the latter that the former had ordered his statue to be made of gold, "as large as life."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RETURN TO SPAIN.



OLUMBUS had taken most affectionate leave of Guacanagari, who shed tears at the parting. Those who were to return home and those who were to remain in this strange land had tenderly embraced each other. The ship had been detained one day in waiting for the Indians who were to go to Spain; but on the morning of January 4th the signal-gun was fired, and the *Nina* having been towed out, her sails swelled to a light breeze and she stood away to the horizon. The cheers from those departing, heartily responded to by those on the shore, died away, and the latter were gazing wistfully on the white specks against the sky, which soon disappeared.

The island scenery along which the caravels passed was very varied. Here was a mountain-point shaped like a cone, treeless and covered with bright green grass, the land being so low toward the main as to make the point look like a little island. There were lofty mountain ranges in the distance, the blue, rocky crests surmounting the long slopes of rich and varied verdure, sharply outlined against the sky; and the fruitful level along the coast, reaching inward here and there, formed valleys through which flowed copious streams. Every hour, as the caravel moved along, the point of view was changing. To Columbus, so singularly alive to the charms of nature, this must have been like the disclosure of a beautiful vision.

Much of the time, however, they were baffled by headwinds. On the 6th, as they were beating against a stiff breeze from the east, the man watching at the mast-head cried out—" *The Pinta!*" That swift-sailing craft was sweeping on toward them, with all her canvas spread before the wind. The sight brought both joy and pain to the Admiral.

Putting about to find a harbor for anchorage, he signalled the *Pinta* to follow. Pinzon obeyed orders, and made the best excuse he could for leaving the fleet. An unfavorable wind had carried him away from the Admiral, he said, and he had ever since been trying to find him. This was a weak apology, but it would not be wise for Columbus to break with his ablest colleague, who had so many relatives and friends among the crews, so he made the most of it. He had, however, one friend on the *Pinta*, who secretly gave him the explanation. An Indian on that vessel had been pointing to the east to designate a place abounding in the "yellow metal"—*gold!* Pinzon, knowing the speed of his craft, spread all his sail to the wind, in order to monopolize the treasure. After being much perplexed in a labyrinth of islands, none of which showed any signs of gold, he was piloted by the Indians to Hayti. Entering a river and opening up trade with the natives, he had obtained quite a quantity of the precious metal,¹ half of which he kept for himself, and distributed the rest among his crew as hush-money.

While this trading was going on, the natives had

¹ Las Casas says: "The Admiral states that in this time he obtained much gold by trading, buying for a thong of leather pieces as big as the two fingers, and at times as big as the hand."

told Columbus, during his erection of the fort, that another "big canoe" like his was in a harbor to the eastward; and he had sent out some Spaniards in a canoe, with natives to manage it, hoping to find his absconding captain; but they had not been able to verify the report, which now, however, was made probable.

This disclosure of bad faith on the part of Pinzon determined Columbus to go back to Spain as speedily as possible, without taking further chances for mutiny. Otherwise he would have tried to explore the coast somewhat, in hope of finding enough of some kind of treasure to at least ballast his caravels for the homeward voyage.

On the 8th the Admiral entered the mouth of a river in a boat with his men to get fresh water. The river was wide and deep at the mouth, and the sand at the bottom gleamed with gold-dust. Many grains were as large as lentils, and the finer grains were very abundant. On returning to their ships, they found "bits of gold between the hoops" of their casks. So the Admiral named this the River of Gold.

As night came on, the 9th, the vessels were again in company on the way to Spain. The next day, when they came into the harbor where Pinzon had been trading for gold, the natives complained to Columbus that the former had kidnapped four of their men and two young girls. On making search, they were found on the *Pinta*. As Pinzon intended carrying them away as slaves, Columbus released them, fairly burdening them with presents, partly in compensation for the wrong they had suffered, and partly for the concili-

ating effect which might thus be produced on the natives of the locality. But this only made the breach wider between the Admiral and his lieutenant, who became very angry and reproached him with bitter words.

Again the caravels are under way with a favorable wind, and turning a point now called Cape Cabron they come upon a race of savages quite different from those they have hitherto met. Are they Caribs? Is this apparent inlet a channel isolating this peculiar people from the mainland? They are hideously painted, their long hair is tied behind and ornamented with the feathers of brilliant birds; they are armed with war-clubs and bows of immense size and strength, from which they shoot great arrows made of hollow reeds and pointed with the hardest wood, bone, or the tooth of a fish. Evidently they are fierce warriors, made so, no doubt, by the near vicinity of the Caribs. They can shoot their arrows almost with the force of a rifle-ball, and their swords, made of a wood almost as tough and heavy as iron, are "not sharp," says Las Casas, "but broad, of nearly the thickness of two fingers, and capable, with one blow, of cleaving through a helmet to the very brains."

Savage and horrid as they appeared, they made no attack, but one of them came on board ship with bows and arrows to sell. Making signs and gestures in the most enthusiastic manner, he succeeded in impressing some very strange notions on Columbus, who somehow understood that there was an island not far off inhabited entirely by women, and that these were occasionally visited by the Caribs. Of the children

born of these Amazons, the males were carried away by the fathers, but the females were left to keep up the feminine stock. To what extent the savage was responsible for imparting such a notion is not for us to say, but the Admiral at once recalled Marco Polo's account of two islands near the coast of Asia, the one inhabited by men and the other by women, between which precisely the same kind of intercourse existed.

From the same source Columbus learned that there were *mermaids*—that is, *sea-maids*—in these parts. In fact he saw them himself, he claims, swimming with their human faces high above the waves, and he had previously seen the same on the coast of Africa. But as they rose out of the sea they did not possess the Venus beauty with which poetic fancy had invested them. They are supposed to have been manatees, or sea-cows, in the distance.

But we must not laugh too heartily at these absurdities. There is no telling what we might have believed had we lived before the era in which natural history has reduced all things to the consistency of law and order as implied in the great systems of nature. Had Cuvier not been a naturalist, he, too, might have believed in winged horses and fire-breathing bulls.

All in all, Columbus was perplexed as to the character and intent of his savage guest. Did he come on board ship out of mere natural curiosity, or was he a spy? His fierce, warrior-like aspect might imply the latter. On the other hand, his frank, communicative manner might simply indicate an attempt to cultivate acquaintance and perhaps a little trade with these remarkable strangers. Anyhow, the Admiral would

first try to conciliate him by kindness. Having feasted him and made him quite liberal presents of "beads and pieces of red and green cloth," he sent him on shore, hoping at least to get some of the weapons used by these people, in order to take them to Spain as curiosities. Or perhaps they might open a trade for gold.

As the boat neared the shore, some fifty or more, all armed with their rude weapons, appeared, peering out here and there among the trees. At first they laid down their arms and came to the boat; but, after selling two of their large bows, they seemed to take alarm, ran back and got their weapons, and also a supply of cords, as if they would capture and bind the Spaniards. The latter, attacking them in true warlike spirit, wounded several in the "breast with their cross-bows, and one in the posterior with a sword." All the rest fled, "leaving their weapons scattered here and there."

Columbus was pained at the necessity for this first shedding of blood in the New World. How would it affect the little garrison at La Navidad? It might at least mar that peace and good-will which he had hoped to maintain with these people.

The next morning his fears were removed. The natives appeared on the beach in large numbers, in the most peaceful and friendly manner. The Admiral sent on shore a large boat-load of men well armed, and they were most cordially received. Indeed, here was the cacique himself, holding in his hand the string of shells, the "wampum belt," at once the symbol and pledge of peace. He wished this to be carried to the Admiral. Presently he came to the boat himself, with only

three attendants, and embarked for the caravels as free and friendly as if nothing had happened.

The Admiral appreciated this noble frankness, and made the interview as pleasant as possible. Indeed, he was strongly impressed with the generous magnanimity of this chieftain. He took him all through the caravel, showed him everything which he thought might gratify his curiosity, and feasted him with that peculiar delicacy to the Indians—biscuits and honey. Presenting him with “a red cap, some beads, and red cloth,” he sent him ashore in a manner becoming his dignity and character.

As the chief returned to his home, some distance in the interior, he sent to Columbus his own crown of gold. What became of all these coronets of gold presented to Columbus by the caciques? Did they gild the royal saloons of Spain, or go to the mint? How invaluable they would now be in our museums!

During the few more days spent by the Spaniards in the Gulf the most friendly relations continued, the natives bringing cotton, fruits, and vegetables, but always carrying their weapons, as if not quite assured of their safety. As four of the young men were very communicative concerning certain islands to the eastward, and were very friendly, Columbus prevailed on them to go with them as guides.¹ Associating incident with place, Columbus called this the “Gulf of Arrows.” It is now called the Gulf of Samana.

Who were these fierce, warrior-like people? They were indeed quite different from the rest of the inhabitants of Hayti. They were the Ciguayans, mountain-

¹ Columbus acknowledged in his journal that “it was impossible for them to learn much of the country while they were ignorant of the language, and were several days in making the people understand a single thing.”

eers, and their chieftain was Mayonabex, who afterward distinguished himself in respect to some of the most noble traits of character.

When they got out to sea, on the 16th, the young Indians did not seem to be so certain as to the island of Amazons or that of the Caribs. First they pointed to the northeast, then to the southeast, Columbus steering in one direction and then in the other. In the latter course he would have found Porto Rico, which, indeed, the natives called Carib; and here he was told he would find lumps of gold as big as beans.

How suggestive is a fresh breeze in the right direction at sea! The wind began to blow just right for a straight course to Spain. Columbus saw the brows of his men lower whenever he took any indirection. He therefore pointed directly for home. This resolution did not come any too soon. The caravels were old and leaky, Pinzon was alienated and might influence his brother and many others, especially since the men were all homesick.

The vessels were still facing the trade-winds, and therefore made slow progress. Fortunately these head-winds were light all through the remaining half of January. The sea was smooth, and the crews had some very amusing diversions. The four young Indians would jump overboard and swim around the ships almost as adroitly as the numerous tunny fishes which played about the sea in various directions. These were probably the bonita, a sprightly fish of the mackerel family, growing to several feet in length. Some of these were captured for food, and also a large shark. These afforded an agreeable supplement to

their spare diet of bread and wine and West India peppers. Whether they graced their tables with the pelicans which they every now and then got sight of does not appear.

Columbus noticed that he now sailed through seaweeds very similar to those he had encountered on his way out from the Canaries, and therefore conjectured that these West India islands extended eastward, well towards those islands on the west coast of Africa. It is worthy of notice that maps were made according to this idea for more than a century afterwards.

Bearing somewhat north of east, they had passed out of the belt of the trade-winds, and were now wafted on direct for Spain. The foremast of the *Pinta* had become seriously weakened, and the *Nina* was obliged, not infrequently, to slacken sail in order to keep her company.

On the 10th of February they took reckoning. But the coterie of captains and pilots, poring over their chart and tables, could not agree, and they differed more widely with Columbus than with each other. He believed they were in the latitude of Flores, the westernmost island of the Azores, while the rest thought they were in line with Madeira and one hundred and fifty leagues nearer Spain than his reckoning showed. As was generally the case in differences of the kind, Columbus was right.

On the 12th the wind rose and the sea ran high. During the next day the gale still increased, and the crazy, creaking vessels labored hard. As the gloom of night settled down on the heaving billows, sharp flashes of lightning in the inky sky to the north-

northeast signalled the coming tempest, which soon burst upon them. Imagine these small sea-worn vessels without decks, in the mid-Atlantic, while the utmost violence of wind and waves rocks the elements about them. All night long the sails are furled, and the frail barks scud before the wind. For three days they bear up against the raging storm, barely carrying sail enough to keep them from going down in the violent cross-waves. Then the sails are taken in again at night. Faint and yet fainter gleam the lights of the *Pinta* through the blinding mists till she is blown so far to the north with her weak mast that they disappear entirely. Frightful, indeed, was the outlook on the following morning. Far as the eye could reach, the clouds were driven like immeasurable angry forces, and the sea was lashed into fury; and the sailors on the *Nina* looked out in vain into the tempest to catch a glimpse of the *Pinta*. All feared that she had gone down during the night.

As the gale continued in all its violence, the crews resorted to vows. Using beans for casting lots—a bean for each man—the Admiral, putting his hand into the cap first, drew the bean marked with a cross, and so was designated to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of St. Mary of Guadalupe, carrying “a wax taper of five pounds weight.” The next lot was for a pilgrimage to St. Mary of Loretto, “in the marc of Ancona, territory of the Pope.” This fell to one of the sailors, but Columbus volunteered to bear the expense. The next lot, to watch all night at St. Clara de Mogues, fell to the Admiral. To make the matter complete, they all vowed to go in their shirts to the nearest church of

“Our Lady,” and there humble themselves, if ever they should reach land. Other vows were also made simply as private offerings of individuals.

By this time the ship’s store of provisions and water had been so lightened as to affect seriously the sailing for want of ballast. The remedy, supposed to have been original with Columbus, but since become common among sailors, was to fill the empty casks with sea-water.

Columbus and the crew on the *Nina* were well convinced that the *Pinta* was lost. The whole result of this momentous enterprise depended, therefore, on the safe return of the former vessel. But for this, with the frail and sea-worn condition of the *Nina* and the unremitting violence of the tempest, there was scarcely the shadow of a hope. The distress of the Admiral at this hour is best mirrored in his own words to the sovereigns: “I could have supported this evil fortune with less grief,” said he, “had my person alone been in jeopardy, since I am debtor for my life to the supreme Creator, and have at other times been within a step of death. But it was a cause of infinite sorrow and trouble to think that, after having been illuminated from on high with faith and certainty to undertake this enterprise, after having victoriously achieved it, and when on the point of convincing my opponents and securing to your highnesses great glory and vast increase of dominions, it should please the divine Majesty to defeat all by my death. It would have been more supportable, also, had I not been accompanied by others who had been drawn on by my persuasions, and who, in their distress, cursed not only

the hour of their coming, but the fear inspired by my words, which prevented their turning back, as they had at various times determined. Above all, my grief was doubled when I thought of my two sons, whom I had left in school at Cordova, destitute, in a strange land, without any testimony of the services rendered by their father, which, if known, might have inclined your highnesses to befriend them. And although, on the one hand, I was comforted by faith that the Deity would not permit a work of such great exaltation to his church, wrought through so many troubles and contradictions, to remain imperfect, yet, on the other hand, I reflected on my sins, as a punishment for which he might intend that I should be deprived of the glory which might redound to me in this world."

In the abstract of Columbus's journal given by Las Casas we have a still closer insight into the reflections of a great and devout mind in the midst of this indescribable scene of danger. *That the world might know that he had accomplished his purpose* was the grand point of anxiety for which he strove and for which he prayed. But his mind trembled in the balance between hope and fear. When he contemplated his frail bark in such a tempest, it seemed as if the most trifling casualty, "even the weight of a mosquito," might send him and his intelligence of a new world to the bottom of mid-ocean. But had not the infinite Father enabled him to overcome all the difficulties of his overtures in Spain, and to make his discovery? Had not the service of God been the aim and business of his undertaking? And, more especially, had not God "delivered him when he had much greater

reason for fear, upon the outward voyage, at which time the crew rose up against him and, with a unanimous and threatening voice, resolved to turn back, but the eternal God gave him spirit and valor against them all? Would not divine providence carry to completion a vast work so notably sustained thus far?

Here is an intelligence which, with a truly just and benevolent feeling, comprehends the fearful situation, and yet hopes for the grandest possibility beyond. The words are more than eloquent—they breathe a genuine simplicity, a true humility, a sublime faith.

Out of his wonted resource of contrivance Columbus drew a possible chance of preserving an account of the discovery. Writing on parchment a brief statement of the whole enterprise since putting to sea—no doubt one of his best samples of miniature chirography—he enclosed the same in a waxed cloth, and, putting it securely in a cask, committed it to the chances of the sea. Some one might take it up, and, finding the sealed letter to the sovereigns, covet the reward of a thousand ducats promised, at a venture, to him who should become courier to the King and Queen. In order that this chance might be doubled, another cask, similarly prepared, was placed on the poop of his vessel, to float away if he and his crew were lost.

No doubt his men looked on this strange performance with curious eyes, but they were not let into the secret lest they should take alarm at the Admiral's sense of danger.

With what joy must the tempest-tossed crew have beheld the streak of clear sky in the west at sunset on

the 15th! And, though the sea ran high all night, the wind was favorable, and "the bonnet was set upon the mainsail."

"Land! land!" was the cry of the sailor at the mast-head at break of day the next morning. Imagine the transports of delight in the crew at the sight of land once more, and that, too, near home! But what land is this to the north-northeast, just over the prow of the caravel? To your charts, ye pilots! "The island of Madeira," cries one. "The rock Cintra, near Lisbon," cries another. "Some point of Spain," argue a number. Meanwhile all wait for the decision of the Admiral, who pronounces the land, now rounded out into an island, "One of the Azores."

But while all hearts are beating with joy at the thought of landing, the wind changes, the sea rolls against them, and they cannot reach their goal. After two days of most tantalizing wind and waves, they come near enough to land to cast anchor, when lo! the cable parts and they must put to sea again, where they beat about until morning. At last they effect a landing. They have reached St. Mary's, of the Azores. This is a triumph for the Admiral in navigation!

Columbus was shy of the Portuguese, and, as the three men he had sent on shore in the morning did not return, he feared he might be the victim of some jealous stratagem. After sunset, three men on the shore hailed the caravel. A boat was sent for them, and they proved to be messengers from Castañeda, the governor of the island, bringing refreshments and the most cordial felicitations. The three missing men he was detaining to gratify his curiosity by a full in-

terview in respect to the wondrous tales they could tell of their perilous voyage and the new world. But nothing surprised him and the islanders more than that the frail caravel should have outrid the unparalleled tempest which had raged for so many days.

The next morning Columbus reminded his men of their vow to "Our Lady." Learning that there was a chapel dedicated to St. Mary in the neighborhood, he engaged the three men from the shore, who had remained on shipboard over night, to secure a priest to perform mass, and dividing the crew equally he sent one-half to redeem their vow first, he and the remaining half intending to go when these returned.

It must have been a novel scene even in those days, this half-naked procession on their way to the church! But why did they not return? Columbus waited until near midday in suspense. As he could not see the chapel from his position, he weighed anchor and stood out till he could command a view, when lo! there was descried a crowd of horse and foot around the little hermitage. Presently some of them, being armed, entered a boat and came towards him. He ordered his men to be ready for either defence or attack, but to keep out of sight. Those in the boat came peaceably, however, but they did not seem to think it safe to come too near. The governor, being in the boat, stood up and asked for a guarantee of personal safety if he came on board the caravel. This the Admiral granted, but wished to know why none of the Spaniards were in the boat. Still his honor did not venture to come very near. The Admiral now urged the Portuguese governor to come on board, intending to make him a

prisoner and so recover his crew. The governor was too wary to come into the trap. Why were his men detained? demanded the Admiral. In what respect had he offended the King of Portugal? Were not the Portuguese as free and safe in Castile as in Lisbon? The Admiral held up his commission with the insignia of the sovereigns of Spain, his whole manner waxing decidedly indignant. "The King and Queen had instructed him to treat all subjects of Portugal with respect," he said, "for the two nations were at peace. The Portuguese should beware how they transgressed the proprieties of peace, lest they incur the royal displeasure." If his men were detained on the island, he still had sailors enough left to take his caravel to Seville, where he would report this outrage against the kingdom of Castile. The governor then ordered the Admiral to proceed to the harbor with his caravel, saying he had done all "by the order of the King, his master." "The Admiral ordered all on board his vessel to bear witness to these transactions, and called out to the governor and those with him, vowing that he would not leave the caravel till he had carried a hundred of the Portuguese to Castile and depopulated the island. He then returned to his anchorage in the harbor, as the wind and weather did not admit of taking any other course."

What could be the meaning of these strange movements? Had war arisen between the two nations during his absence?

The next day brought another tempest, and, as the caravel was in danger of being driven onto a lee shore, the Admiral put to sea for the island St. Michael's,

but he now discovered that the half of his crew remaining to him contained only three experienced seamen. For some two days the bark, thus helplessly manned, drifted about in the utmost peril. The weather then moderating, they returned to St. Mary's.

Now there came from the shore two priests and a notary. They were very patronizing. The governor was ready to do the Admiral any service, they said, if he could but be assured that he was under the patronage of Spain. Would he not be so kind as to show his commission? This being done to their satisfaction, they returned to the shore, and the next day the prisoners were liberated. This last move of the governor was, no doubt, a studied way of getting out of a close place.

When the prisoners returned, the mystery was solved. They had ascertained that the King of Portugal had instructed Castañedo, as well as others in like authority, to detain Columbus whenever he might appear, fearing lest his enterprise might in some way infringe on the rights of Portugal. The governor, failing to surprise him in the chapel, had resorted to stratagem, but he had failed alike in both. Now it behooved him to let himself down as easily as possible.

Columbus, having had enough of St. Mary's and the Portuguese governor, sailed away on Sunday, the 24th. For several days the weather was pleasant, but on Wednesday, the 27th, another contrary gale arose and a tempestuous sea. Having had no opportunity to recover from the exhaustive efforts necessary to him during the previous storm, so continuous and so severe, what wonder that he now became impatient at being

thus driven back from the very door of home? And how natural that he should contrast the balmy days he had just spent in the land of perpetual summer with these terrific gales and threatening seas! "Must it not be," he thought, that the earthly paradise spoken of in Genesis is somewhere in the remote east, as theologians have said? It almost seemed as if he had been near its borderland.

The storm continued to rage, and at midnight on Sunday, March 3d, a squall so terrific struck the caravel that all her sails were "split" and she was obliged to scud under bare poles. They passed the next day in the tempest, and the following night was even more fearful than the former. The waves ran mountain high, the rain seemed to literally pour out of the heavens, while the lightning's glare and the loud peals of thunder in various parts of the firmament were enough to remind them of the final day of doom. Lots were again cast, and there were pledges of solemn fasting.

In the night, while they labored with a terrible storm and were near meeting with destruction from the cross-sea, the fury of the wind, which seemed to carry them up to the skies, and the violent showers and lightning from many parts, there was the cry of "land!" but only to exchange one terror for another; for, not knowing precisely where they were, there was the most imminent danger of being dashed in pieces on rocks and shoals. The ragged sails were taken in, and they kept aloof from shore till morning. The dawn revealed the well-known rock of Cintra, at the mouth of the Tagus.

Should he again put himself into the hands of the Portuguese? Notwithstanding his distrust of this nation and their king, the violence of the storm left him no choice. In a letter written years afterwards to Doña Juana de la Torres he says: "I was driven by a tempest into the port of Lisbon, having lost my sails." Sailing up the mouth of the river the 4th of March, he cast anchor in front of Rastelo, about three o'clock in the afternoon. Can we imagine the sense of relief which came to these tempest-tossed mariners as they furled their sails in the calm and dropped anchor in the quiet river!

All along the shore the inhabitants had been watching with prayerful anxiety as the caravel made way against the storm. Gray-haired mariners had never seen such a tempestuous winter. Many ships were lying in the harbors weather-bound, and many had been wrecked along the coast.

One may imagine that the hand of the Admiral could scarcely have been steady as he penned the tidings of his return, to be borne by the swiftest messenger to the sovereigns of Spain, and he would have been more than human if he had not felt a little self-complacent as he delivered for the King of Portugal his dispatch of a new world found in the west. Surely he might take the liberty of saying to him that in a case of necessity he had sought a Portuguese port, and that in order to be more safe than he might be at Rostelo he would like to be permitted to anchor at Lisbon.

His misgiving was not altogether unwarranted, for, while the courier to the King was making his nine leagues to Valparaiso and back, a certain officer of the

Portuguese navy, lying at Rastelo, demanded him to give an account of himself and his vessel. Columbus "stood on his dignity," affirming his claim to respect as an admiral of Spain, and so refused to grant the request. This, after due explanation, was satisfactory, and now that the naval officer had learned the nature of the voyage just made by this little caravel, he was ready to "lionize" her. Approaching with fifes, drums, and trumpets, he showed every possible deference, and offered his services to the fullest extent.

Lisbon was the one place in all the world to be most deeply moved by this wonderful discovery. Had not Portugal led the world for many decades in navigation, at once the most perilous and the most successful in opening up unknown parts? But here was an achievement, by one little boat, which quite eclipsed anything they could boast. For two days the Tagus teemed with crafts of every kind, from the stately barge to the small boat, bearing all classes of the curious and the inquiring, who gazed with increasing wonder on the plants, the birds, the animals, and, above all, the people, so unlike any other they had ever seen. Surely God had bestowed the favor of this great discovery on the King and Queen of Spain, they said, on account of their devotion to the Christian faith.

On Friday, the 8th of March, a cavalier from King John II. arrived, inviting the Admiral to court, and not only were his personal accommodations on the way to be free, but the King had ordered that anything required for his vessel or his crews should be furnished in like manner.

On that same evening of the arrival of the invitation

Columbus set out, and on the following evening reached the court. He was accompanied by the King's steward, and as he approached Valparaiso a company of cavaliers came out to escort him into the royal presence.

Here he is ordered to be seated, after the manner of royalty. The King congratulates him on his great achievement, and assures him that all things in his kingdom are at the service of him and his sovereigns. But mortification is mingled with the keenest interest in the Admiral's account—no doubt eloquently given—of the eventful voyage and the wonderful discoveries. Had all this been stupidly thrown away by the kingdom of Portugal? The wish being father to the thought, he suggested that these wonderful parts just discovered might, after all, possibly be included in the capitulations to himself by Spain in 1479! These capitulations Columbus had never seen, but he knew well that he had sailed far enough from the coast of Africa. Be that as it might, said the King, he and the sovereigns of Spain could easily adjust the matter. How little did these two personages know what part of the world they were talking about!

The Admiral was most royally entertained for the night by the prior of Crato, the principal personage of the place, and was requested to meet the King again the next day in order to complete the charming interview. The latter asked all sorts of questions about the soil of this new country, its productions, its people, the route thence, etc., etc. All these inquiries Columbus answered most minutely in order to convince his Royal Highness that he had not been in Guinae.

Unfriendly critics have found an important point against Columbus in the account of this interview, as given by certain Portuguese historians and biographers, Barros, Souza, and Vasconcelos, who say that he departed himself loftily, and spoke in a very vaunting and provoking manner to the King, as if to pique and worry him over his lost opportunity—so much so that it is said some of the indignant courtiers present suggested his assassination. They had seen the Indians in Columbus's ship, they said, and they looked like the people within the route of the discoveries of Portugal. The most remote lands discovered by their own nation were very near to those found by Columbus. He, therefore, had not discovered any new country, and deserved to die for having tried to embroil the two nations. They would provoke him, and, having gotten him into a quarrel, slay him as if by accident or in honorable combat. But the King was too far above such dastard plotting to accept the advice.

No doubt Portugal was bitterly chagrined at the loss of this magnificent enterprise. How grand it would have been to have added India in the west of the Atlantic to Africa in the east! How easily within their reach it had once been! And who could tell what relation these new-found lands might bear to those they were exploring? For, be the world round or flat, the vast relations of sea and land, both to the east and to the west, were as yet a mystery. Indeed, up to this hour the great ocean seas were but little known outside the Mediterranean.

In every word and look of Columbus these jealous courtiers would see and hear much more than he meant

to convey. And in view of all the circumstances of the case, if the Admiral felt just a little self-conscious, and a slight inward sense of triumph over those who had doubted him and openly set him at naught, and could not altogether conceal these feelings, what wonder?—what blame?

On Monday, March 11th, after dinner, Columbus took leave of the King, having received every mark of affection, and was escorted on his way for some distance by all the knights of the court. As the womanly curiosity of the Queen, now at Villa Franca, had requested an interview with the newly-made Admiral bearing such remarkable tidings, he stopped there on the way, and was received in the most cordial manner by her and her ladies in attendance. Again the wonderful story was told to a most appreciative group of listeners.

Columbus boarded his caravel on the 13th of March, and reached Palos at noon on Friday, the 15th, after an absence of a little less than seven months and a half.

CHAPTER IX.

THE TRIUMPHANT ARRIVAL.

HOW the little town of Palos was wild with joy as they beheld the familiar image of the *Nina* floating inside the bar of Salt has long been known to the world and can easily be imagined. Here were at least a part of those who had long since been given up as lost in the "Sea of Darkness," and they could tell something about the missing ones. There are faces wet with the tears of delight, because those most cherished in their affections are returned to them—almost like those raised up from the dead! But there are other tearful faces revealing a joy far less complete, because those whom they cherish most are simply heard from in the distance, and the uneasy imagination is left to fill up their more recent fate, which, after all, may be too sad to be conjectured. Yet joy everywhere prevails. The crowds throng the docks; and the shops along the double street which monopolizes the little town, cradled in a depression between high hills, are closed; the church bell rings, and old and young follow the Admiral up the hill to St. George's church, just outside the village. Here they kneel devoutly, scarcely noticing the image of St. George and the dragon just over the altar, for all are returning thanks for the great discovery and for the safe return of so many.

On this same afternoon, while the air is yet vibrating

to these shouts and peals of universal joy, yonder comes the *Pinta*, passing the bar of Salt, and standing up the harbor. The storm having blown her away into the Bay of Biscay, she had made the port of Bayonne; whence Pinzon, supposing Columbus to have been lost, had written to the Spanish sovereigns, asking permission to report the great discovery in person at court. He had expected to surprise Palos; but, seeing how he had been anticipated by the Admiral, his enthusiasm was cooled at the recollection of his desertion and at the thought of what might follow in consequence. He therefore disembarked quietly. His health was shattered, his high reputation as one of the chief aids to this great enterprise damaged, and, as he soon received an admonitory letter from the court, which gave him to understand that his presence there would not be welcome—at least not without that of Columbus—he sank under the weight of mortification and disappointment, and died in a very short time. Poor Pinzon! He had been guilty of a serious misdemeanor, and sad was the expiation he had to make, but let his incalculable services in revealing one-half the globe be most gratefully remembered. What could Columbus have done without him? Engrave his virtues “on the rock,” but write his errors “in the sand.”

The sovereigns were now in Barcelona, an important seaport town in Catalonia. Tidings truly welcome, almost transporting, was this message from the courier as to the New World! For once, Ferdinand's cautious reserve must have been shaken, and Isabella's sanguine, generous nature must have been moved to its

utmost depth. Let Mercury, messenger of the gods, with winged feet, fly! Tell the Admiral to come at once, straight across the kingdom of Spain, and in his own moving words relate this astounding event to the King and Queen!

Meanwhile, Columbus has gone to Seville to await the royal orders. By the 30th of March the answer is at hand. How shall he proceed to this distant point? In his caravel along the Mediterranean? This was his first impulse; but no, he has had salt water enough for awhile. April is about to unfold her vernal charms in this delightful climate, so he will go by land, obliquely, almost across the kingdom. But he must first set in motion preparations for an immediate second voyage. So the sovereigns have requested in their short but enthusiastic letter, just arrived.

News always had swift wings, even before railroads and telegraphs. Ere long all Spain was on the move to learn as much as possible about this new thing under the sun, which was to eclipse alike the Portuguese discoveries in Africa and the subjugation of the Moors at home. By the time Columbus was on the way the whole country was thronging him *en route*. Every city and town through which he passed was an ovation. The six Indians with him—one had died on the way across the ocean and three were sick at Palos—took the lead, so ornamented as to represent the golden wealth of the Indies. Then followed the brilliant birds; brilliant, indeed, they must have been, especially the forty parrots mentioned as in the procession. There were the most striking specimens of plants and fruits, wholly new to the beholders; especially noticeable were

the spices and the royal palms, which might indicate the outskirts of India. Do not fail to note the brightly ornamented belts, the figure-heads or masks pieced out and trimmed with gold, and the rudely fashioned coronets of the precious metal—all presented by the chieftains, and disclosing alike the wealth and the novel style of life in the newly-discovered country.

But all this merely prepares the eye to behold Columbus himself following on horseback and surrounded, ere he reached Barcelona, with a splendid cavalcade of courtiers and hidalgos who had come, in their eagerness, to escort him into the city. It is but rational, and requires no stretch of the imagination, to accept the account of the people thronging and crowding from every direction to get a glimpse of this unprecedented sight. The windows, the balconies, the sides of the narrow streets, and even the housetops, would be crowded with curious spectators of every age and character. Those bending under the weight of years, those in the full strength of manhood and womanhood, the beauty and buoyancy of youth, and the innocent, gaping curiosity of childhood—all would be there, elbowing their way to the front. The poet or the artist who should depict the scene otherwise would surely be delinquent to human nature. The bruit of the discovery had caused a great sensation in the court and among the people; and, great and momentous as it was in itself, it was supposed to be even more wonderful in some respects than it really was. Nothing, in those days at least, could turn people's heads and set everybody wild like the news of boundless wealth ready to hand—gold! pearls! precious jewels! Was not such

the wealth of farthest India, of which they now beheld the trophies? What would have been their feelings had they known that they were only beholding the symbols of the great American wilderness, swarming with savages?

But the King and Queen? Behold them, in the most regal state of expectancy, seated on a dais under a canopy of brocade of gold, in the Alcazar or Arabian castle, once the seat of the Moorish kings, now occupied by the bishop of Urgil. On their right is Prince Juan, the heir-apparent. The tall and stately figure of the Admiral enters, white-haired and venerable as a Roman senator, and surrounded by a crowd of gay cavaliers. As he approaches, the monarchs rise. He kneels to kiss their hands, which they give with deferential hesitation, and graciously lift him up and signal him to sit in their presence, after the manner of royalty.

Let him now tell where he has been and what he has seen, for every ear is listening with the utmost tension of curious interest. Speak, O Admiral and Viceroy of the Indies, for this is the grandest and proudest hour of your life. Drain the cup of joy—it is your supreme moment, and the tide of your glory will soon ebb, never to rise again in your day.

Columbus may have discovered a foreign accent, but he was without doubt an able speaker; and here were the representative subjects of his discourse, to be pointed out in passing—here was such an audience as few men of his rank ever addressed. And the story!—it was well worthy of the audience, listening in almost breathless astonishment. Truly this is news!—news from the antipodes, and here are the evidences—tangi-

ble—visible ; no old musty parchment of Marco Polo or John Mandeville, but the direct living word and living things from beyond the “ Sea of Darkness ” !

It is an hour of intense feeling ; but the thought does not seem to be of wealth or dominion—a tide of *religious emotion* carries everything before it. Mines of gold and seas of pearl there may be, but here is a pagan world, naked and destitute, given to the care and tutelage of the church, which has just conquered the heathen within its borders. The things contemplated are not only mysterious, but truly immense. They are at least conscious, it would seem, of the fact—these great minds—that an incalculable change is about to come to the world. A new era is dawning. They are overshadowed by the *Infinite*. The discourse ended, the sovereigns are kneeling with clasped hands and tearful eyes lifted heavenward, uttering thanksgiving and praise to Almighty God for this great and strange providence. The entire audience follow the example. No shouts of joy, no loud acclaim of triumph, but solemn silence, tearful devotion, thought unutterable ! From the royal chapel choir, accompanied by instruments, swells forth the inimitable *Te Deum Laudamus*, bearing all hearts heavenward, “ so that it seemed as if, in that hour, they communicated with celestial delights,” says the venerable Las Casas, who, then some eighteen years of age, was probably a student at Salamanca, and who was afterwards intimately acquainted with Columbus, as also with others who witnessed the above.

What an event, what an impression was this !—at once the grandest reality and the greatest delusion ; the former to be proven by the nations in the centuries

to come, but, alas! the latter only to be experienced by Columbus. But let us not anticipate the shadows and the darkness—they will come soon enough. Let the great discoverer enjoy to the full these days of popular applause and courtly esteem. Let the dignitaries of church and state crowd around him, and feel honored by a few words of conversation with him about the new world. Let him appear amidst the crowds, "his face wreathed with smiles of content." Let him ride out on his horse, King Ferdinand on one side and Prince Juan on the other. And is he not entitled to dictate measures to the sovereigns, as to the management of the great enterprises of the Indies? The high honors of the hour have cost him many anxious, struggling years, and they will be followed by days dark and tempestuous enough. Surely the reward allotted Columbus for his stupendous achievement was but slender—a few years of bitter trial, disappointment, and suffering both of body and of mind.

Well, we must not forget that story about the egg! Cardinal Mendoza, always friendly to Columbus, even in the dark days of the antechamber, is said to have now made a banquet in his special honor. During the repast, a jealous courtier asked: If he—Columbus—had not discovered the Indies, were there not other men in Spain who might have done so? On the principle that actions sometimes speak louder than words, the Admiral took an egg and invited any one of the company to make it stand on end. After the vain attempt, variously and amusingly made, no doubt, had gone the round, he touched it to the table firmly enough to depress the end, and so made it stand.

Like many other striking incidents in the lives of great men, this lacks the earliest and best authority, being first given by Benzoni in 1865. But if the illustration were "a hackneyed one even in those days, and we find it ascribed, among others, to Brunelleschi, the architect who constructed the marvellous cupola of the Cathedral of Florence seventy years before the first voyage of Columbus," still it may have been original at Mendoza's table—at least in the manner of its application. At all events, it bids fair to live as long as the name of Columbus; and, as Irving has said, "the universal popularity of the anecdote is a proof of its merit."

As a signal of honor to himself and family, the sovereigns gave him a coat-of-arms, May 20th; the field of which contained, above, a lion to the right and a castle to the left; and below, five golden anchors on a blue ground to the right, and a sort of archipelago of golden islands on a sea of waves to the left. They also prefixed to his name, with much preamble and formality of statement, the title "Don," which implied a high honor in those days. Now it scarcely means more than Mr. does in English.

As to the inscription,—

"To Castile and to Leon
Columbus gave a new world,"

it does not appear in the earliest representations of the escutcheon, and in the biography ascribed to Ferdinand Columbus the motto is said to have been placed on his father's tomb by the King some time after his death. Ferdinand's appreciation of the greatest man in his realm seems to have overtaken him somewhat late—after that man was cold and silent in death.

CHAPTER X.

THE BOUNDARY LINE AND THE SECOND VOYAGE.



PAIN and Portugal were rival nations, so closely and compactly located as to be able to watch each other with the most narrow-eyed vigilance. The Pope, regarded as ruler of Christendom, and so, in a spiritual sense at least, ruler over all nations, was supposed to be able to give away a heathen territory to any Christian nation who might discover or conquer it with intent of evangelization. For more than half a century these incumbents of the papal chair had given Portugal permission to sail south, and to Spain the same privilege to the westward. And in 1479 the two nations had agreed to abide by this decision as to their naval enterprises. For many years Portugal seemed to have the field of promise; and no limit appeared, as yet, to the rich territories of Africa. Spain, meanwhile, might content herself with her colony on the Canaries, or speculate on the "Sea of Darkness." Now the scene of action was changed. Columbus, sailing to the west, had found the most magnificent islands and what seemed to be a mainland. Spain was sure her caravels had not trespassed on the undiscovered territories assigned to her neighbor, but the latter was *not* so sure. So, in order to prevent all controversy, Spain applied to Alexander VI. to draw a line of demarcation. On May 3d, 1493, the imaginary limit was announced, one hundred leagues west of the

Azores and Cape Verde Islands. Beyond this Spain might have the field to the west, if she would plant the Catholic faith in the new territories. No one thought of the trouble which such a line might cause on the other side of the globe.

This line of demarcation corresponds with Columbus's line of no variation of the compass, and was no doubt suggested by him. That this line made a great impression upon him is clear from his own words :

“ Each time that I sail from Spain to India, as soon as I have proceeded about a hundred nautical miles to the west of the Azores, I perceive an extraordinary variation in the movements of the heavenly bodies, in the temperature of the air, and in the character of the sea. I have observed these alterations with especial care, and I notice that the mariner's compass, whose declination had hitherto been northeast, was now changed to northwest ; and when I had crossed this line, as if in passing the brow of a hill, I found the ocean covered by such a mass of sea-weed, similar to small branches of pine covered with pistachi nuts, that we were apprehensive that, for want of a sufficiency of water, our ships would run upon a shoal. Before we reached the line of which I speak there was no trace of any such sea-weed. On the boundary line, one hundred miles west of the Azores, the ocean becomes at once still and calm, being scarcely even moved by a breeze. On my passage from the Canary Islands to the parallel of Sierra Leone we had to endure a frightful degree of heat, but as soon as we had crossed the above-mentioned line the climate changed, the air became temperate, and the freshness increased the farther we advanced.”

How natural, if not necessary, therefore, it is to believe, with Humboldt and others, that Columbus sought to fix the political line by the physical. But other lines of no variation have since been found; so that this was, after all, no natural limit of territory.

Portugal was exceedingly anxious to get a foothold in the newly-discovered country, and went so far as to fit out vessels for that purpose, thinking, no doubt, that *possession* was "nine points out of ten in the law." She was as tricky now as she had been with Columbus some years before. Ferdinand either knew or suspected what was in progress, and sent an ambassador with two letters, one friendly and the other threatening. He might use the one or the other, as the case might demand on his arrival. But King John had bribed Ferdinand's counsellors, who kept him constantly advised of this monarch's plans, and thus he was made ready for the double message. Having escaped the trap, he sent to his royal brother, saying that during sixty days, while they might be discussing matters, no vessel should sail on any voyage of discovery. This might prove a quietus to the excitement; then, too, he must be conciliatory, for he wanted the dividing line to run due west from the Canaries, instead of north and south. This sort of parleying just suited Ferdinand. He would now have time to get Columbus ready for his second voyage, while King John's hands were thus fastened by his own tying. He sent another embassy, which was instructed to travel slowly, to procrastinate in every possible way, and, if they could not gain time enough otherwise, to call an arbitration. King John saw

through the scheme, and, helplessly chagrined, said, "These ambassadors have neither feet to travel nor head to propose." He was beaten and gave up the contest. Behold these kings playing their sharp game for islands and continents!

Everything was on the move now, in order to be ready as soon as possible for Columbus's second voyage. Free lodgings were granted him and his servitors wherever he went. The titles and privileges before granted were confirmed, and he was given the royal seal, to be used as occasion might require. May 28th, after having received every possible demonstration of favor from the sovereigns and from the whole court, he left Barcelona, and reached Seville early in June. Here he was joined by Juan Rodrigues de Fonsica, archdeacon of Seville, appointed by the Crown to direct preparations. This church dignitary is painted in very dark colors by most writers.¹ He began to take issue at once with Columbus in his plans of preparation, particularly in respect to the number of footmen he was to have as Admiral and Viceroy. Foiled in this demur by the sovereigns, he seems to have contracted an implacable enmity toward his victim, whom he never ceased to persecute till the day of his death, and then he seems to have transferred his spirit of unyielding bitterness to the Admiral's descendants. He held the control of the affairs of the

²"A shrewd man of business, a hard task-master, an implacable enemy, he displayed, during his long administration of Indian affairs, all the qualities of an unscrupulous tyrant, and was instrumental in inflicting on the islanders keener miseries than ever have been brought by conqueror upon a subject race." — *Helps' Life of Christopher Columbus*.

Indies some thirty years. A thoroughly worldly and unforgiving spirit seems to have marked his career.

“Money! money!” is often the cry of kings as well as of common people. The new fleet would require funds. There was a royal order which put all the ships and seamen in the ports of Andalusia at the service of Columbus and Fonsica at reasonable pay. This would ensure convenience and economy. Then two-thirds of the tithes of the church were appropriated; also certain sequestered property of the Jews, so cruelly banished. Other resources were husbanded. Finally, a loan of 5,000,000 maravedis was secured from the Duke of Medina-Sidonia.

Artillery and weapons of warfare of all kinds were gathered from the various ships of the nation. Military stores left over from the Moorish wars and stored in the Alhambra, now degraded into an arsenal, were laid under requisition. Everything was hurry and bustle, for Portugal was watching and might take advantage of delay.

How remarkably Italy is destined to contribute to these enterprises in discovery! Did Perestrello and Cadamosto aid Prince Henry? Here is not only Columbus in this important service of Spain, but the man who presides over all this din of preparation in the harbor of Seville, Juonato Beradi, is a Florentine merchant now settled here; and, more interesting still, that man assisting him so energetically is *Americus Vespuccius*, hereafter to give name, unwittingly albeit, to one-half of the globe. He is an active and well-cultivated man of some forty-two years.

As for Isabella, she is now a sort of missionary.

The Indians brought to Barcelona by Columbus are baptized, the King, the heir-apparent, and the Queen herself standing as sponsors; the whole affair being conducted according to the ecclesiastical magnificence of the times. She is instructing the Admiral to deal kindly with the natives of the new country, and punish all such as impose on them or put stumbling-blocks in the way of their conversion to the faith. To Bernardo Buil, the Benedictine monk selected by the Pope as his apostolical vicar, she gives the sacred vestments and vessels of her own chapel. He and his twelve consecrated assistants must do all they can to establish a church in the new world.

The scene of active preparation is now transferred to the harbor of Cadiz, from which the fleet is to sail. Seventeen vessels in all are here—three stately carracks, several yacht-like crafts of light draft for coasting and exploring; the rest are caravels, rounded up at prow and stern after the picturesque style of that time. An extensive fleet, this, compared with the three small vessels which sailed from Palos less than a year ago! From every direction the stores of outfit and provisions and the tide of living things flow in. Here comes a stock of cows; also horses, asses, and other beasts; here are farm implements and seeds of all the grains, vines, and fruit trees of all kinds—everything of the kind needed in stocking a new country. It is a sort of entry of Noah's Ark on a large scale.

But the people!—see them crowd and throng! No opening of prisons now; no persuasion whatever necessary. “Men were ready to leap into the sea to swim, if it had been possible, into those new-found

parts," says one who lived near that time. At first the number permitted to go had been limited to 1,000; but, under the pressure, it soon rose to 1,200, and finally is supposed to have reached in all nearly 1,500. In addition to all the crews, artisans, laborers, and officers, here was the adventurer, ready for good luck or bad, as the case might be, expecting, somehow, to get an immense amount of gold. Here was the pleasure-seeker, dreaming of some elysium of easy delectation and unparalleled scenes of beauty. Here was the soldier, looking for unheard-of feats in arms. Finally, here were those who merely wanted to go, they could scarcely tell why, but managed to move along with the crowd, unchallenged, and stow themselves away unseen. All, all expecting, somehow, to pick up an immense fortune.

But there are some here who must not be lost in the crowd—Alonzo de Ojeda, a dashing, daring young soldier from the Moorish wars, and favorite of the Duke of Medina-Celi; Diego, youngest brother of Columbus; Las Casas, father of the famous bishop and apostle to the Indians, and also an uncle; Juan Ponce de Leon, of Florida fame afterwards; Juan de la Cosa, who made the first map of the new world, and Dr. Chanca, of Seville, one of the chief chroniclers of the voyage.

Strikingly impressive must have been that last day in port. The twelve ecclesiastics, under their leader, would see to it that the accustomed religious rites were performed by all the crews. Friends embraced each other. Not only from the masts did gay banners float, but brilliant colored fabrics decorated many of

the ships. The royal standard was on the stern of every vessel. Pipers, harpers, clarions, and trumpets vied with each other, and "held in mute astonishment the meriads and even the sirens with their sweet modulations." Cheers rent the air, and cannon thundered across the waters.

The morning of the 25th of September dawned auspiciously. Before sunrise the voices of the sailors were heard, as they weighed anchors and hoisted their sails. The vessels fall into line, and are escorted out onto the deep by Venetian galleys. Surely this is a sudden rise of glory for the Admiral, one of which his excitable nature must be intensely conscious.

A week of uneventful sailing passes, and on the 1st of October the fleet reaches the Gran Canaria. Here they stop to repair a leaky ship. On the 5th they reach Gomera, where they remain two days to complete their outfit. Finding here all the thriving industries of civilized life, they take in, not merely wood and water, but also increase their stock of domestic animals—calves, goats, sheep, and the swine from which descended the abundant supply of these animals for which the new world is afterwards noted, some of them even reverting to the original wild state. Domestic fowls also are taken in, and seeds and plants for the orange, the lemon, melons, &c.

On the 7th they are under way again, but for six days they are becalmed among these islands. On the 13th, however, a fresh breeze swells their sails, and they bear to the south of the course of the former voyage, for the Admiral is desirous of seeing those islands inhabited by "man-eaters," said to lie south-east of Hayti.

As they are now out on the wide sea, Columbus gives sealed directions to the several captains, to be opened only if the vessels become scattered, in order that none may fail to make their port at La Navidad. Las Casas says these instructions were under seal in order that even the captains might be dependent on Columbus for their course to the new world, and no one be able to divulge the secret. As they now swept on charmingly in the track of the trade-winds their only hindrance was the tardy, heavy sailing of the Admiral's ship. Dr. Chanca thought they had lost one-fourth of their time on the voyage on account of her. Ten days passed and still they were sailing grandly. But where are those great tracts of sea-weeds which were encountered on the former voyage? They are away to the north, and are not needed this time to remind the timid sailors of land. Now the ships are outward bound for a definite port, every eye anticipating the most magnificent landfall at the end of the voyage.

As the end of the month approached they were surprised by drenching rains, sharp lightnings, and crashing thunder. For hours the fleet was tempest-tossed, and danger, dark and threatening, prevailed. In the language of Syllacius, a contemporary writer, "Their yards were broken, their sails torn, their ropes snapped asunder, the timbers creaked, the decks were floating with brine, some ships hung suspended on the summits of the waves, while to others the yawning floods disclosed the bottom between the billows." But, lo! the clear glow of lights at the tips of the masts and yards of the ships, especially the Admiral's ship, as-

sures one and all that the good St. Elmo is present with his candles and will secure the stilling of the tempest. According to the custom of sailors, under the spell of this time-honored superstition, the crews, with tears of joy, salute the saint by chanting their "sacred hymns" and "offering prayers." "Forthwith the tempest began to abate, the sea to remit its fury, the waves their violence, and the surface of the waves became as smooth as polished marble." So says Coma, a writer of that time. Herrera, a Spanish historian, referring to the same nautical superstition occurring in the famous voyage of Magellan, says: "During these great storms, they said that St. Elmo appeared at the topmast with a lighted candle, and sometimes with two, upon which the people shed tears of joy, receiving great consolation, and saluted him according to the custom of mariners. He remained visible for a quarter of an hour, and then disappeared with a great flash of lightning which blinded the people." Both Pliny and Seneca mention a similar superstition as prevailing among Roman mariners, who attributed the lights to Castor and Pollux, tutelary divinities of sailors in ancient times. Hence the sign which St. Paul saw on the Alexandrian ship, referred to in Acts viii, 11. These lights of St. Elmo are now known to be simply a natural phenomenon. When storm-clouds, heavily charged with electricity, float low over the earth, an electrical communication takes place between them and such projecting points as church-spires and masts of ships, causing them to glow with a blue-white light, which may continue for a number of seconds or even minutes.

Saturday evening, November 2d, finds the crews weary with the voyage, which must have been immensely greater than most of them had ever experienced. The sailors, too, are tired with bailing out the water from leaky ships. It would seem, also, that the supply of fresh water was becoming scant, and that some were suffering from thirst. The pilots cast up their reckonings, some concluding that they were 780 leagues from the Canaries, and others making the distance 800 leagues. The Admiral is looking sharply at the sky and sea, and is watching the shifting puffs of wind. He is sure, from the color of the water, the motion of the waves, the changing winds, and the fitful showers, that *land is near*. With his wonted caution, he therefore gives orders to take in sail, and watch carefully throughout the night.

The first light of Sunday morning gilds the top of a high mountain directly ahead. All are cheered with the cry of "land" from the mast-head of the Admiral's ship. Shouts of joy ring out upon the waves from the whole fleet. *Dominica* shall be the name of the majestic island heaving in full view, says Columbus, for is it not Sunday? As the ships move on, other islands, clad in elysian beauty, rise above the horizon like beatific visions. Flights of brightly colored, noisy parrots and other brilliant tropical birds are winging their way from one island to another, and the wind from off the land is laden with sweet odors. Every vessel now becomes a sanctuary. The decks bustle with the crews and passengers, and the united fleet gives thanks for the prosperous voyage, and chants the impressive service of the church, including the

Salva Regina. Surely this is a fitting manner of saluting the *New World* on the *Lord's day*.

Every one is eager to set foot on the land, but Columbus can find no good anchorage for the fleet along this island, so they sail to the next one of large size, which he names Mariagalaute, after his ship. Here they land and set up the royal banner, taking possession, by means of the usual ceremony, of this, along with the other five islands they have just passed. But are there no inhabitants in this luxuriant forest redolent with spices? Is there no eye to behold these brilliant flowers?—no hand to pluck this luscious fruit? They search in vain. The island is a solitude.

As nothing could be so interesting here as some specimen of humanity, they make sail for the next large island. Another night is spent on the water, and the dawn reveals a most romantic landscape. A volcanic peak rises to an immense height, and cataracts, pouring down its sides, appear like water falling out of heaven. Columbus, recalling a promise made to the monks of "Our Lady of Guadalupe," in Estremadura, names this large and wonderful island *Guadalupe*.

The next day they land and pass a week of sight-seeing. Here is the first village in the New World!—desolate and forsaken, however, excepting the infants and little ones, whom the terrified mothers have left behind in their flight. But their frightened, innocent staring is soon diverted by gentle caresses and by those tinkling hawk's bells and other bright trinkets which the strangers bind upon their naked arms.

Let us look around upon this strange village!—upon this scene in human life forever passed away! The

houses—about thirty, built of logs or poles, interwoven with branches and huge reeds and thatched with the immense, tough leaves of the palm—are not constructed after the *circular, wigwam style*, so common on most other islands, but are *square and cottage-like*, with porticoes, the posts of which are sometimes carved to represent objects—serpents in one instance. And they are built around a square, in truly social style. Let us enter and examine the furniture. Ah! here is the hammock, the Indian bed, which is to add a novelty to civilized luxury and a new word to our language. It is made of a loose, rope-like twisting of cotton, tied in a net-like form, and hung by cords. For dishes, here is the calabash, rude earthen bowls, and, O horrors! human skulls for drinking vessels! Here are fabrics of cotton—“many cotton sheets,” says Dr. Chanca, “so well woven as to be in no way inferior to those of our country”—and also cotton yarn and the crude wool. Here are huge bows and arrows tipped with bone—bones of human shins, the best judges think. Dr. Chanca mentions arrows pointed “with tortoise-shell” and “fish spines,” “barbed like coarse saws.”

The same author—and he was an eye-witness of the very scenes we are now describing—says of these islanders, the Caribs: “In their attacks upon the neighboring islands, these people capture as many of the women as they can, especially those who are young and beautiful, and keep them as concubines; and so great a number do they carry off that in fifty houses no men were to be seen, and out of the number of the captives more than twenty were young girls. These women also say that the Caribbees use them with such

cruelty as would scarcely be believed, and that they eat the children which they bear to them, and only bring up those which they have by their native wives. Such of their male enemies as they can take alive they bring to their houses to make a feast of them, and those who are killed they devour at once. They say that man's flesh is so good that there is nothing like it in the world; and this is pretty evident, for of the bones which we found in their houses they had gnawed everything that could be gnawed, so that nothing remained of them but what was too tough to be eaten; in one of the houses we found the neck of a man undergoing the process of cooking in a pot. When they take any boys prisoners they dismember them and make use of them until they grow up to manhood, and then when they wish to make a feast they kill and eat them, for they say that the flesh of boys and women is not good to eat. Three of these boys came fleeing to us thus mutilated."¹

Now let us see what there is *around* the houses of this strange village. Here are domesticated geese, possibly ducks, not unlike those of Europe; and parrots as large as the common fowl and of the most striking contrasts of brilliant plumage—the blue, green, and scarlet being illuminated with the lightest shades, even to white. Here may also be some of those dogs more or less common to the islands throughout, “of various colors,” some of them “like large house dogs.” some of them like “beagles,” but none of them

¹ Syllacius says, “It is their custom to dismember the male children and young slaves whom they capture, and fatten them like capons. They feed with greater care those that are thin of flesh and emaciated, as we do wethers.”

able to bark. But here is something—probably in the rude cottage garden—at once fragrant, curious to the eye, and delicious to the taste—the pineapple.

Syllacius says, “Hares, serpents, and lizards of monstrous size are produced in this island. There are also dogs which do not bark, and are not subject to canine madness. They divide these at the spine, and, after roasting them slightly, satisfy their hunger with them when human flesh cannot be obtained. They have birds of various kinds, among these a prodigious number of parrots.”

In one house they find what seems to be an iron pot, since thought to have been made of a peculiar stone, as iron was not found in that region. But here is a curiosity among savages—the stern-post of a vessel! This must have drifted across the ocean from some civilized country. Perhaps it is a part of the wreck of the *Santa Maria*. Now all stand aghast at the sight of a pile of human bones—probably the remains of many an unnatural repast.

The fleet now moved on some six miles, and anchored in another harbor. The island, some seventy miles long, consisted of magnificent mountains and fertile plains. Small towns were found here and there along the coast, but the inhabitants had fled in terror at the sight of the sails. Those who landed succeeded, however, in taking a number of women and several small boys, all captives, who were glad of an opportunity to escape, and were not only greatly relieved but delighted when they were given to understand that these remarkable strangers were opposed to eating human beings. “During the seven days that the Spaniards remained

in this island," says Syllacius, "many fugitives and female captives from the Caribs sought refuge in the ships. These being received with humanity and liberally supplied with food concluded that the gods had come for their deliverance. When they were advised by the Spaniards to return to the Caribs, they threw themselves at their feet as suppliants, and some clasped their arms round the masts, entreating, with floods of tears, that they should not be driven away to fall again into the hands of the Caribs, to be butchered like sheep." From these captives, through their interpreters, the Spaniards succeeded in drawing out quite a little information about the islands. It soon became apparent that several of the more important of them were in league, and that they made war upon the remaining islands in their vicinity. They would even venture out on the sea in their canoes, made of hollowed-out trunks of trees, to the distance of a hundred and fifty leagues. They were very expert with the bow and arrow, the latter being not only tipped with bone or some other hard substance, but also charged with the juice of poisonous herbs.

Many, indeed, were the startling facts which their much-relieved captives had succeeded in communicating. And now great was their alarm, at night, to find that one of the captains and eight men were missing. Straying away without permission, they had become bewildered and lost in the dense tangled woods. Early the next morning the Admiral sent out parties in various directions to blow their trumpets and scour the woods, while guns and arquebuses were fired from the ships along the shore; but those sent out returned

at night without sight or sound of the lost. And what shocking spectacles they had witnessed!—limbs of human bodies hung up in the houses, as if curing for provision; the head of a youth, so recently severed from the body that the blood was yet dripping from it, and parts of his body were roasting before the fire, along with the savory flesh of geese and parrots.

During the day several natives had been gazing on the boats in the distance, but they fled when they were approached. Also some captive women appealed to them for protection. These they decked out with hawk's bells and beads, and sent them back to the shore, hoping to entice the men. But they soon returned, stripped of their ornaments, and begged to be taken on board. Interviewing these they learned that the chief was now away in search of victims, having with him ten canoes and some three hundred men. Meanwhile, the women, who could handle the bow nearly as well as the men, were left in defence of the islands. Dr. Chanca wrote, "We were enabled to distinguish which of the women were natives and which were captives by the Caribbees wearing on each leg two bands of woven cotton, the one fastened round the knee and the other round the ankle; by this means they make the calves of their legs large and the above-mentioned parts very small, which I imagine that they regard as a matter of prettiness."

But what was to be done for the missing? Alonzo de Ojeda, always ready for some daring adventure, offered his services. With forty men, he undertook to search the island. They went a long distance into the interior, blew trumpets in the valleys and on the

mountains, waded many streams, tore their way through almost impenetrable tangles of briars and bushes, but could find no trace of the lost.

But the country!—its fertility, the aromatic trees and shrubs; the bright flowers, of every form and hue; the fruits, at once beautiful, fragrant, and luscious; and the birds, the brilliant plumage of which had the lustre of gems in the sun. Even the butterflies and beetles, so large and so resplendent, must have charmed them. And what quantities of honey they had found, both in hollow trees and in clefts of rocks!

As the crews had now taken in water, washed their clothes, and recreated themselves along the shore, the fleet was ordered to sail. At the last moment, the missing men arrived, in the most pitiable state of exhaustion. In their bewildered wanderings, they had scaled rocks, waded streams, torn their way through briars and tangled vines, climbed trees in fruitless effort to see the stars and so find their position as they were accustomed to do at sea, and traversed forests so dense that they were almost dark at midday. Finally reaching the shore, they had happened to go in the direction of the ships. Native women and boys they had brought, but had seen no men.

The Indians kept telling Columbus that the mainland was to the south, but he, having *La Navidad* immediately in view, sailed to the northwest. Through a continuous archipelago of the most enchanting islands the fleet passed, the Admiral giving a name to each as they went along.

On the 14th, as the weather became threatening, he made harbor in an island called *Ayay* by the natives,

but which he named Santa Cruz. They were still among the ferocious Caribs. The boat which landed found, as usual, a village without men, and most of the women and boys which they took to the ships were captives, taken by these warriors in their usual way. Meanwhile, a canoe has come round a point, and, approaching the ships, the men and two women gaze in astonishment at the fleet—a group of huge figures which must have been novel indeed to them. A boat steals hard upon them before they are aware of it. They attempt to escape, plying their paddles like witches, but the boat cuts off their retreat. The natives seize their bows, and the arrows come whizzing so closely that the Spaniards shield themselves with their bucklers. The women are as fierce and take as close aim as the men, one of them sending an arrow clear through a buckler and wounding a Spaniard. Seeing that several of their men are wounded, the Spaniards run their boat into the broadside of the canoe and upset it. But these Caribs can fight about as well in water as in their canoe; and one Spaniard feels the deadly wound of a poisoned arrow, sent by one of the women, and afterwards dies in consequence.

“At last,” says Syllacius, “they were captured and taken to the Admiral. One of them was pierced through in seven places, and his intestines protruded from his wounds. Since it was believed that he could not be healed, he was thrown into the sea; but emerging to the surface, with one foot upraised and with his left hand holding his intestines in their place, he swam courageously toward the shore. This caused great alarm to the Indians who were brought along as inter-

preters, for they dreaded that the cunning Caribs, taking to flight, would contrive some more savage schemes of vengeance. They accordingly persisted obstinately in maintaining the opinion that those who were caught should be put out of the way. The Carib was therefore recaptured near the shore, bound hand and foot more tightly, and again thrown headlong into the sea. This resolute barbarian swam still more eagerly towards the shore, till, pierced with many arrows, he at length expired. Scarcely had this been done, when the Caribs came running to the shores in great numbers—a horrible sight. They were of a dark color, fierce aspect, stained with red interspersed with various colors, for the purpose of increasing the ferocity of their looks. One side of their heads was shorn, the other side covered with straight black hair hanging down at full length. From these also many captives fled to the ships, as it were to the altars of safety, complaining loudly of the cruelty and ferocity of the Caribs.”

Peter Martyr can scarcely deliver himself of the sensations of horror at the sight of these Caribs when brought to Spain. Tall of stature, frowning and defiant in countenance; their long, coarse hair; circles of paint around the eyes; bands of cotton above and below the muscles of the arms and legs, causing them to swell—all rendered them most hideous and terrifying. They were, however, a brave race, the mothers teaching their children to use the bow and arrow while scarcely more than infants. Their hardy, roaming life developed their intelligence; and while the neighboring tribes could measure time only by the days and nights and

the sun and moon, they could make a fair attempt at calculating times and seasons by the stars.

But enough of the Caribs. The fleet moved on past Santa Ursula and her eleven thousand virgins till it reached Porto Rico, which was the home of most of the captives taking refuge with the Spaniards. On the west end they found a fine harbor, abounding in fish. Here was a native village, with a public square, a main road, a terrace—all in all, quite an artistic, home-like place. But every soul had fled—everything was silent as death.

Columbus is nearing Hayti and is anxious for his garrison at the fort. As the fleet passes along the north side of the island, they barely touch in a few places. Once a boat is sent ashore with two caravels to guard it, while the sailor is buried who died from the poisoned arrow of the Caribs. On reaching the Gulf of Samana, where the affray with the arrows occurred on the previous voyage, Columbus sent ashore one of the young men taken from thence to Spain. This and one other were the only natives left of the seven who had left Spain with the fleet, five having died on the way. He was finely dressed and highly ornamented. The Admiral expected much from this attractively attired convert to the Christian faith, and the youth had made many fair promises, but he never returned. The Lucayan, named Diego Colon at his baptism, after the Admiral's brother, became a very efficient interpreter of the natives, and remained faithful to the Spaniards till death.

In the harbor of Monte Christi, at the mouth of the River of Gold—so named because gold had been found

in its sands on the previous voyage—the fleet anchors again, the Admiral having some thought of a settlement here. As the crews stroll along the shore and into the woods, they find several decaying bodies, “one with a rope round his neck, and the other with one round his foot.” “On the following day they found two other corpses farther on, and one of these was observed to have a great quantity of beard” (Chanca). Here are indications which awaken fears for the garrison at La Navidad.

But why do these natives come on board the ships for traffic with so much confidence? Surely they cannot be guilty of murdering the white men. The night has settled down and left a mere outline of the mountains against the sky when the fleet reaches the harbor of La Navidad, so the anchors are dropped about a league from land. Two cannon are fired. Every ear listens for a response from the guns on the fortress, but hears only the echo as it rolls along the shore. They strain their eyes for some signal-light, but all is darkness and silence. Where are the fires of the natives which gleamed through the forest in every direction when Columbus was here before?

The hours drag on slowly, for every one is in suspense. At midnight they hear the paddles of a canoe approaching. Listen! the paddles cease and a voice is calling—calling for the Admiral. The natives are directed to the flag-ship, but will not come on board till they are assured by the person of the Admiral, made clear in a strong light. One of them is a cousin of the good cacique Guacanagari, and, coming on board, he presents to the Admiral two masks, “gilt-edged” as usual.

But to the story of the fort. Columbus must know what is become of his men. They depend on the Lacayan interpreter, and he cannot understand these Haytians very well, the dialect being somewhat different. If these latter are rather reticent at first, a liberal supply of wine at the repast given them makes them quite communicative, and by and by a fairly connected story is elicited. Some of the men at the fort had sickened and died. Others had quarrelled among themselves. Others had gone away into the island and taken wives. Caonabo, the mountain cacique, had attacked Guacanagari, had wounded him and burnt his village. Hence it was that the friendly chief was not present to welcome him.

This narration of facts was sad enough, but it relieved the Admiral of suspense and left him the hope of still finding some of his men in the island. At any rate, Guacanagari had been faithful, and his people were still friendly.

When the next morning dawned Columbus was impressed with the changed aspect of the place. The year before, every part of the island teemed with life. Here and there the smoke of the hamlet ascended. The natives swarmed along the shore. Canoes were coming and going about the harbor. Now there was simply desolation and silence. A boat was sent ashore to examine the fort, and the explorers found that the evidences confirmed their fears. Everything was in ruins. Here and there were fragments of chests, spoiled provisions, and weather-worn garments. Yonder lurked several Indians behind the trees, closely eyeing every movement. The Admiral, distressed at

this report, came ashore himself the following morning. He made the closest search among the ruins and around for some distance, finding broken utensils and shreds of garments among the grass and weeds. Arquebuses and cannon, fired from the fleet, thundered along the shore, in order to arouse any of the garrison who might be hiding away in the neighborhood, but there was no response. They now explored the site of Guacanagari's village, and found only charred ruins. As Columbus had ordered the officers of La Navidad to bury what treasure they might have, or throw it into the well in case of sudden danger, they excavated at various points and cleaned out the ditch and the well, but nothing could be found. While all this was in progress the Admiral took the boats along the shore, partly to extend the search and partly to find a better site for his settlement. About three leagues distant was a hamlet which evidently had been abandoned in haste. The houses¹—almost overgrown with grass and weeds—and the grass and weeds for a long distance around were thoroughly searched. Here were stockings, pieces of cloth, the anchor of the *Santa Maria*, and a beautiful Moorish robe carefully folded as when brought from Spain. Meanwhile, not far from the fortress, some of the men dug out here and there, from under the grass, eleven bodies, evidently in European clothing. These they gave a formal Christian burial.

¹ Dr. Chanca says, concerning this village: "These people are so degraded that they have not even sense to select a fitting place to live; those who dwell on the shore build for themselves the most miserable hovels that can be imagined, and all the houses are so covered with grass and dampness that I wonder how they can continue to exist."—*R. H. Major's "Select Letters," p. 52.*

By and by they succeeded in gaining the confidence of a few natives, and the Lacayan interpreter drew enough out of them so that a pretty clean thread of narrative of the events sought after was traced. At the departure of Columbus, all his good instructions had been disregarded by the men under Arana. They coveted the gold ornaments and other items of value among the natives, and resorted to violence in order to obtain them. They quarrelled with one another, and the under officers had rebelled against Arana. Notwithstanding Guacanagari's indulgence of two or more wives to a man, they had outraged the wives and daughters of the Indians. They had roamed at will about the island, as if in perfect safety. The two lieutenants, Gutierrez and Escobado, not being able to rule over Arana, had seceded with nine adherents and gone away into Cibao after gold. Here, Caonabo, the Carib adventurer who had become cacique of the mountain regions, and was called "Lord of the Golden House," soon put them to death. He had watched the intruders with a jealous eye from his mountain fastness, and now improved his opportunity. Forming an alliance with a neighboring chief, he stole the march upon Guacanagari and La Navidad while the latter contained but ten men and they fast asleep. He completely sacked the fortress and the entire neighborhood, wounding the cacique with his own hand. Not only those of the garrison who were within the stockade, but all the Spaniards quartered among the Indians in the vicinity, were sought out and put to death. A few who tried to escape by taking to the sea were drowned.

Such is the first chapter in the history of civilized life in the New World. Herrera says that the men left at La Navidad by Columbus were mostly of the baser sort, crude in mind and low in morals. If so—and their conduct sustains this view—was not the new colony at Hayti about as well off without them?

CHAPTER XI.

THE NEW ENTERPRISES.



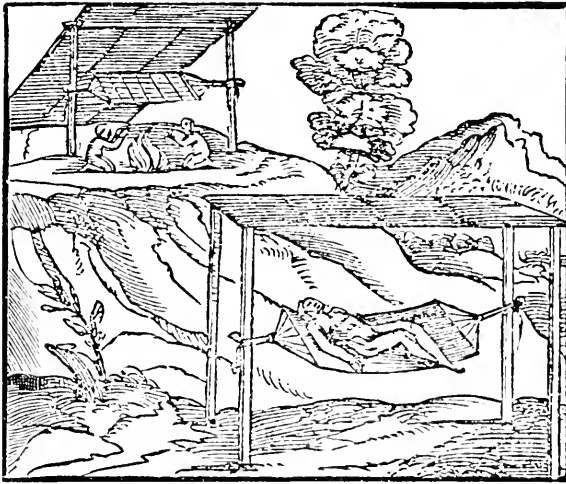
HAVING become clearly informed as to the sad fate of La Navidad, the location of the new colony claimed immediate attention. The site of the fortress was abandoned not only because of its painful associations, but on account of the unhealthfulness of the low, damp country around it and because there was no stone or lime for building. A caravel was sent out in one direction, therefore, while the Admiral, with a small party, went out in another, in order to reconnoitre. When both parties returned, at night, the former related a very interesting diversion. While they were sailing along the shore a canoe with two natives came out to meet them. One of them was a brother of Guacanagari. So said a pilot on board, who had been on the former voyage. The chieftain was residing scarcely three leagues away, with fifty families around him; and, as he was suffering from his wound, he wished the Admiral to come and see him. Dr. Chanca says, "The chief men of the party then went on shore in the boat, and, proceeding to the place where Guacanagari was, found him stretched on his bed, complaining of a severe wound. They conferred with him and inquired respecting the Spaniards; his reply was in accordance with the account already given by the other, viz., that they had been killed by

Caonabo and Mayreni, who also had wounded him in the thigh. In confirmation of his assertion he showed them the limb, bound up, on seeing which they concluded that his statement was correct. At their departure he gave to each of them a jewel of gold, according to his estimate of their respective merits. The Indians beat the gold into very thin plates, in order to make masks of it, and set it in a cement which they make for that purpose. Other ornaments they make of it to wear on the head and to hang in the ears and nostrils, and for these also they require it to be thin. It is not the costliness of the gold that they value in their ornaments, but its showy appearance."

The next day Columbus prepared to visit the cacique, whose brother called on him and again urged him to come before he could get under way. It would be well to make as great an impression as possible of the power and magnificence of the Spaniards. The Admiral and his train of a hundred of his best men were arrayed in the most imposing style, their glittering armor and rich attire producing a most unwonted effect in this new world of simple ways. "With pipers and drummers arranged in order, and line of battle formed, they march to the residence of the cacique." The chief was still reclining in his cotton hammock, surrounded by his wives and his faithful subjects. Again he related the tragedy of the garrison, shedding tears most freely and assuring his listeners of the perilous part he had taken in their defence. Here, too, were the proofs as he pointed them out—scars on the bodies of his people, evidently made by Indian weapons.

But this generous cacique would not be himself

without presents ; so he gives six hundred or upwards of precious stones and jewels of various colors, a cap



MANNER OF NURSING THE SICK.

elaborately ornamented with jewels and containing one of special fine effect and value, a hundred gold beads, a gold coronet, and two calabashes filled with the precious dust—the gold, in all, being equal to eight marks and a half. What in return? Glass beads and hawk's bells, of course ; also knives, needles, pins, small mirrors and various gew-gaws of copper—the latter far more valuable than gold in the eyes of the natives. Some say that Columbus also decorated the chief with his own inner vest or doublet, magnificently embroidered and variegated with the most brilliant colors, in Moorish style.

But the Admiral wished to see Guacanagari's wound, his surgeon and Dr. Chanca—both present—being skilful in the treatment of such cases. The

chief consented. As the crowd of people darkened the wigwam, the doctor proposed to go out into the light, which was accorded by the chieftain, leaning on the arm of the Admiral. When the former was seated and the surgeon began to untie the bandage, the cacique said the wound was made by a stone. "It is certain," says the doctor "that there was no more wound on that leg than on the other;" but it seemed sore to the touch. As nearly two months had elapsed since the disaster, the bruise may have disappeared externally, while the deeper effect of the rough missile at least partially remained. Some of those present could see nothing but a hoax in the whole matter. The cacique was feigning all this in order to conceal the guilty part he had taken in the massacre. Father Buil, the Benedictine monk, especially, could afford no charity whatever. The Admiral should make an example of the perfidious wretch at once. But Columbus had seen too much of the kindness of this great-hearted man to doubt him now, unless there was clear and unmistakable evidence against him. He would therefore suspend judgment until further disclosures. It would be soon enough to claim indemnification when a guilty complicity in the massacre was certain. No; the Admiral will be cordial. Calling his interpreter, he explains the object of his voyage. He visits these distant parts in order to improve the inhabitants, making them kind to each other by teaching them what is good. He will lead them to give up all bad practices, that they may be under the protection of the Spanish monarchs, the best and most powerful rulers in the world. And to Guacanagari, his inti-

mate friend and ally, he will grant special protection. These words brought the chieftain to his feet. Stamping on the ground and raising his eyes to heaven, he gave a loud shout, to which the six hundred Indians around him responded in a "tremendous acclamation." At this the one hundred Spaniards in light armor were so startled that they involuntarily grasped the hilts of their swords, thinking that a battle with these savages might be just at hand.

Columbus invited Guacanagari to his ship that same night, and, though he still seemed to be suffering from his wound, he ventured to gratify his curiosity. If the two small caravels of the previous year's visit had surprised him, what must have been his astonishment on beholding this fleet of seventeen sail riding at anchor in the harbor. As he approached he was startled by the roll of drums, the striking of cymbals, and the lightning and thunder of cannon. On boarding the Admiral's ship he saw the Carib prisoners, who belonged to the cannibals of Buriquen. Peter Martyr thinks he shuddered at the sight of them even in chains.

It must have been no small pleasure to the Admiral to escort his savage friend, so full of curiosity, through the different ships, and witness his amazement on seeing the different parts of their structure, also the plants and fruits of the Old World, but more especially the animals—cattle sheep, swine—and the horses!—what magnitude, grace, and strength, and yet what submissive docility, they showed. Whether the fleet horse for the race-course or the strong one for armor, their fine condition, highly polished harnesses, and gay trappings

gave them a grand aspect. Then did not the Indians suspect that these strange animals lived on human flesh ?

With this wonderful variety of useful creatures, our domestic animals, the cacique had nothing to compare but the small coney-like *utia* and a limited variety of dumb dogs. Over against the domestic fowls the chief might place the tame parrots, and possibly some kind of geese or ducks ; but it is doubtful if he had ever seen the hen which lays the golden egg. Imagine the elevation of mind which this chieftain must now have experienced, believing, as he did, that all these wonderful things—ships, animals, and men—had just come from heaven ! “The Europeans had no sooner entered on this vast continent and the islands about it,” says Las Casas, “but the natives showed them all imaginable kindness and respect, and were ready to worship them as gods ; but these soon took care to convince them of their error, and to deliver them from the danger of falling into this sort of idolatry, by treating them with all manner of cruelties and tormenting them like so many devils ; so that these barbarous people received as great a turn in their thoughts concerning the Spaniards as the barbarians of the island of Miletia did in respect of St. Paul ; for as these believed him to be a god whom they had just before taken for a murderer, so the other really found them to be murderers whom they had a little before esteemed as so many gods.” But more light on this by and by.

The cacique now descends from heavenly things to those which are more earthly. The ten captive women taken from the Caribs appeal to his amorous tempera-

ment. Though his dialect is somewhat different from theirs, they can readily understand each other. How tenderly he communes with that tall, stately beauty, whom the Spaniards, in admiration, have named Catalina. For, though escaped from the dreaded Caribs, is she not still a captive?

Now the Admiral and the chieftain dine together. Surely in this cordial act of hospitality, if in any way, old confidence and friendships may be revived. The Admiral talks of coming to live with the cacique, of building houses in the neighborhood, etc., etc. The cacique is pleased with the plan, but is not the place very low and damp and decidedly unhealthy? Alas! no demonstration of cordiality can restore the ease and delightful charm of the former intercourse. Were these indeed heavenly visitors? What about that covetous, quarrelling, licentious garrison just laid among the dead? Loss of confidence—alienation—how destructive, how demoniacal the influence! Even the symbols of the Christian faith, to which these natives seemed readily inclined, have become objects of suspicion. The chief is not at all pleased to have that image of the Virgin hung about his neck by the Admiral!

Meanwhile, not a few of these gallant men and high dignitaries among the Spaniards were regarding Guacanagari with an evil eye. Father Buil especially was not particularly under the influence of that charity which "hopeth all things" and which "thinketh no evil." Speaking to the Admiral a little aside, he suggested the propriety of detaining the cacique as a prisoner now that he was on board ship. But such treacherousness and bad faith found no response from Columbus.

The face mirrors the soul even to the eye of a savage. Guacanagari felt ill at home amidst such obvious feelings of mistrust and suspicion, and soon begged leave to depart.

The next day there occurred that obscure and double line of movement which generally follows the loss of good faith even among those who are civilized. A messenger came from the cacique to inquire when the Admiral would leave. The next day, was the reply. Then came a brother of the chieftain, along with others, ostensibly to barter gold; but he seemed quite as much interested in conversing with the captive women as in trade. Catalina especially attracted his attention. By and by he left. About midnight a light appeared on the shore. All were now sleeping soundly except a single watch, and so stealthily did the Indian women let themselves down the side of the ship that they were able to get away before the alarm could be given. Like so many sea-nymphs, they struck out for the shore; and, though the sea was rough, they made the full three miles to land before they could be overtaken. Pursuing in the direction of the beacon-light, the men captured four of the fugitives; the rest, including the stately Catalina, made good their escape.

The next morning the Admiral sent to Guacanagari, asking him to cause search to be made for the fugitives, and, in case they could be found, to send them back to the ships. But lo! when they arrived, "not a soul" could be found. There had been a complete removal of the village. The chieftain and his island beauty were probably their taking "honeymoon" in the mountains. This was only one more item to feed the

suspicion of Father Buil and his colleagues. Scarcely anything was now too bad to be believed of the kind-hearted chief. But Columbus still held to his good opinion of him.

“On the next morning,” says Dr. Chanca, “the Admiral resolved that, as the wind was adverse, it would be well to go with the boats to inspect a harbor on the coast at two leagues distance farther up,¹ to see if the formation of the land was favorable for a settlement, and we went thither with all the ships’ boats, leaving the ships in the harbor. As we moved along the coast the people manifested a sense of insecurity, and when we reached the spot to which we were bound all the natives had fled. While we were walking about this place we found an Indian stretched on the hill-side, close by the houses, with a gaping wound in his shoulder, caused by a dart, so that he had been disabled from fleeing any further. The natives of this island fight with sharp darts, which they discharge from cross-bows in the same manner as boys in Spain shoot their small arrows, and which they send with considerable skill to a great distance; and certainly upon an unarmed people these weapons are calculated to do serious injury. The man told us that Caonabo and his people had wounded him and burnt the houses of Guacanagari.”

It is strange that the Spaniards should have continued in uncertainty as to the course and manner of the death of the garrison when so many different parties testified essentially to the same thing.

Melchor Maldonado had been in the opposite direc-

¹ Port Dauphin.

tion, to the eastward, and, coming into the dominions of another cacique, who at first threatened him, at the head of his warriors, but was soon conciliated, learned that Guacanagari had indeed gone to the mountains.

All this exploring had simply convinced Columbus that the low, damp country along the coast would be too unhealthy for his colony, and that the absence of stone would be a serious hindrance to building. But there was pressing need of an immediate landing. The people were weary of the ships, and the long confinement was telling heavily on the domestic animals. Columbus determined, therefore, to go some distance to the eastward, especially since he "had tidings of gold in that direction." On the 7th of December the fleet weighed anchor. "But the weather was so adverse," says Dr. Chanca, "that it cost more labor to sail thirty leagues in a backward direction than the whole voyage from Spain, so that, what with the contrary wind and the length of the passage, three months had elapsed before we set foot on land. It pleased God, however, that through the check upon our progress caused by contrary winds we succeeded in finding the best and most suitable spot that we could have selected for a settlement, where there was an excellent harbor¹ and abundance of fish, an article of which we stood in great need from scarcity of meat.

"The land is very rich for all purposes. Near the harbor there are two rivers ; one large, and another, of moderate breadth, somewhat near it. The water is of a very remarkable quality. On the bank of it is being built a city, called Marta (Isabella), one side of

¹ Port Isabella, ten miles east of Monte Christi.

which is bounded by the water, with a ravine of cleft rock, so that at that part there is no need of fortification; the other half is girt with a plantation of trees, so thick that a rabbit could scarcely pass through it, and so green that fire will never be able to burn it. A channel has been commenced for a branch of the river, which the managers say they will lead through the middle of the settlement, and will place on it mills of all kinds requiring to be worked by water. Great quantities of vegetables have been planted, which certainly attain a more luxuriant growth here in eight days than they would in Spain in twenty. We were frequently visited by numbers of Indians, among whom were some of their caciques, or chiefs, and many women. They all came loaded with *agis*,¹ a sort of turnip, very excellent for food, which we dressed in various ways. This food was so nutritious as to prove a great support to all of us, after the privations we endured when at sea, which in truth were more severe than ever were suffered by man, and as we could not tell what weather it would please God to send us on our voyage, we were obliged to limit ourselves most rigorously with regard to food, in order that, at all events, we might at least have the means of supplying life.

“The Indians barter gold, provisions, and everything they bring with them for tags of lace, beads and pins, and pieces of porringers and dishes. They all, as I have said, go naked as they were born, except the women of this island, who, some of them, wear a covering of cotton, which they bind around their hips, while

¹Yams.

others use grass and leaves of trees. When they wish to appear full dressed, both men and women paint themselves, some black, others white and various colors, in so many devices that the effect is very laughable; they shave some parts of their heads, and in others wear long tufts of matted hair, which have an indescribably ridiculous appearance; in short, whatever would be looked upon in our country as characteristic of a madman is here regarded by the highest of the Indians as a mark of distinction."

The site of the first Christian city in the New World being thus determined, the disembarkation began. Imagine the busy, bustling scene, as some 1,500 people, pent upon shipboard for about three months, crowd the gangways out onto this delightful spot of green earth. The common laborer, the skilled artisan, the cavalier, the priest—all classes of the active kingdom of Spain in that day were here rejoicing in the freedom and the charming novelty of the hour. Not less interesting must it have been to witness the happy liberation of the domestic animals, which had suffered so severely from the long and unwonted confinement. We imagine they must have looked somewhat lean and gaunt. The dark holes in ships for so long a time could not have furnished the conditions for a very thrifty appearance.

But what a houseless, homeless state of things! Ah! it is not all romance for such numbers of men and beasts to be dumped out into a wilderness, without proper enclosures for the latter or convenient shelter for the former. Let not these gay cavaliers be too much allured by the exuberance of tropical verdure around

them, by the mingling of fruit and flowers and the nesting and singing of birds in mid-winter. The bright stars above this torrid zone will look down upon a land reeking with miasmas and fevers.

For some time to come this glassy sheet of water constituting the broad harbor will mirror an active scene. Long confinement has made every one alert for the greatest activity. Engineers project the public square and the streets, and masons and carpenters make the atmosphere resound to their enterprises. Farmers and gardeners begin to break the soil for orchards and all kinds of husbandry, and a general enthusiasm prevails. The walls of the church, the public storehouse, and the Admiral's residence are rising—all of stone, and a whole town of cheap, temporary residences of wood, plaster, coarse reeds, etc., come up almost as quickly as Jonah's gourd. Mere extemporized tenements will do for the present; more solid structures can replace them by and by. But if those more solid structures were ever reared, they have long since disappeared, for the ruins of the church, storehouse, and Admiral's residence are all that remains of the long-since abandoned city of *Isabella*.

The stern realities of pioneer life in an untried climate soon became apparent. Long confinement, sea-sickness, spoilt meat, and mouldy bread were a poor preparation for the exposures of a life, without houses, amidst the moisture and exhalations of dense forests, lowlands, and slow-moving rivers, in a tropical climate. Exhaustive labor on the part of those unaccustomed to it and used only to recreations in an old

and highly cultivated country soon produced the most depressing effects.

“The maladies of the mind mingled with those of the body.” The severest disappointment—than which nothing is more depressing—was the inevitable consequence of that delusion which possessed every mind in respect to this newly discovered country. The gallant soldier fresh from the Moorish wars, and anticipating rich conquests in the incomparably wealthy territories of the Grand Khan, found himself in a “forest primeval,” swarming with naked savages of the most timid character. Nowhere was there a foe “worthy of his steel.”¹ The speculator, who had laid in his stock for trade in the land of gold and spices, experienced a dull and unprofitable routine in dicker- ing with destitute savages, giving beads, hawk’s bells, and gew-gaws generally for crude cotton yarn, parrots, and occasional bits of gold. The idle and indefinite adventurer found himself absolutely without an aim. All classes of laborers and artisans were obliged to take things in the rough and to “rough it” in the most literal sense. “One-third of our people have fallen sick within the last four or five days,” says Dr. Chanca. This statement discloses something of the kind of hospital which this new city of Isabella must have been turned into in a short time. The Admiral himself, overcome by the exertion, anxiety, and immense sense of responsibility incident to his situa-

¹ “The weapons they used,” says Las Casas, “were neither capable of defending them, nor of offending their enemies to any purpose, and were more like those that children use to play with than such as are fit for soldiers to use in war.”

tion, became prostrate, and could only give occasional attention to the arduous and critical enterprises of the hour.

The problems now confronting Columbus were the most difficult possible. The first and most pressing necessity was the relief of his colony. From the outset the store of provisions laid in had been inadequate to the number of people; and as the wines were put into poor casks, much of it was lost; the beef and pork were not such as they should have been, and the horses accepted for the use of the colony seem afterwards to have been exchanged on the sly by the venders for others which were inferior. The great extent of sickness incident to the long voyage and the change of climate had well-nigh exhausted the medicines. Here were over a thousand people in the wilderness without even "*manna*" to quell their murmurings. Neither could they supplement their scanty fare by means of "snakes and lizards and spiders and worms" picked out of rotten wood, after the manner of the natives.

If these people had possessed the genuine moral principles and noble purposes which bore up the pilgrims of the *Mayflower* during the snow and ice, sickness and death of their first New England winter, the case had, no doubt, been different; but here was a heterogeneous community, with but mixed and groveling motives at best, and, not even knowing in what part of the globe they were, they had no manner of conception of the nature of the enterprise before them. Now place a foreigner over such a community and under such circumstances, himself without experience

in governing and not even knowing the circumstances, and say if it would not need an extraordinary miracle to secure order and prosperity.

To govern and develop this first colony in the New World would have been quite enough for any one man, even if he had been well trained and experienced in the work before him and was possessed of high prestige in his nation, but this was only a fraction of what was expected of Columbus. He was to bring forth-into Spain the fabulous wealth of the Indies, such quantities of spices and gold¹ as would load ships of immense tonnage. As to spices, they had indeed found even on "the sea-shore" "some spots showing so many indications of various spices as naturally to suggest the hope of the best results for the future," but it would require experts, capital, and time even to test the matter. Gold he had expected to find ready to hand in large quantities, amassed by his garrison against his return; and, over against his disappointment, he had set on foot an exploring expedition, of two different parties—the dashing, daring Ojeda in one direction and Gorbolan in another. These had brought back very promising samples and the most glowing reports—"things that appeared incredible," "and boasted so much of the abundance of gold" that Columbus felt "a hesitation in speaking and writing of it to their Highnesses." On this point Dr. Chanca was about as enthusiastic as Columbus. He says, "The party that

¹About this time it was reported "that a rock adjacent to a mountain being struck with a club, a large quantity of gold burst out, and particles of gold of indescribable brightness glittered all around like sparks." What must have been expected from such a country!

went to Cibao saw gold in so many places that one scarcely dares state the fact, for in truth they found it in more than fifty streamlets and rivers, as well as upon their banks." One nugget found by Ojeda weighed nine ounces. This was sent to Spain to be admired by such men as Peter Martyr. If the rivers rolled down their golden sands, and lumps of the precious metal lay on the surface, what might be found by thorough and systematic mining to a proper depth?

But serious difficulties were to be overcome before the Spanish ships could be loaded with the precious metal. They needed passable roads, beasts of burden, and shelter and protection—a fortress, for instance—in the mining regions. But the greatest embarrassment was the ill-health of the people. Those sent out in good health would probably fall sick on the way. "It would be also extremely inconvenient to leave the sick men here in the open air," writes the Admiral to the sovereigns, "or in huts, with such food and defences as they have on shore, although these Indians appear every day to be more simple and harmless to those who land for the purpose of making investigations. In short, although they come every day to visit us, it would nevertheless be imprudent to risk the loss of our men and our provisions, which might very easily happen, if an Indian were only, with a lighted coal, to set fire to the huts, for they ramble about both night and day; for this reason we keep sentinels constantly on the watch while the dwellings are exposed and undefended."

Twelve ships out of the seventeen which had come from Spain were waiting in the harbor at a great

expense ; and the return back of some of them at least with supplies for the colony, not later than May, was most imperative. They must therefore sail at once, even though they contained nothing—beyond the tale of disaster concerning La Navidad—but golden promises.

The condition of the new enterprise at this hour is best illustrated by the so-called "memorial," drawn up by Columbus at Isabella, January 30, 1494. It is designed for the sovereigns, but is addressed to Antonio de Torres, who was about to command the returning fleet. He was, no doubt, to make such running comments in the presence of the sovereigns as the occasion might require. This very interesting document is in the famous Navarrete collection. In the margin of each chapter or item is the reply of the sovereigns, the documents thus annotated being returned to Columbus. It is given in English in R. H. Major's famous "Select Letters," published by the Hakluyt Society.

After the opening formalities, he assures them that, while nothing has "occurred to diminish the importance" of what he had "formerly written or said to their Highnesses," he would soon be able to prove it all "by facts." He then refers to the spices found along the coast and to the wonderful reports brought in by Ojeda and Gorbolan concerning the gold in the interior. This being a divine sanction of the great enterprise undertaken by their Highnesses, they ought to give thanks to God for the same. In the margin the sovereigns write, "*Their Highnesses return thanks to God for all that is recorded,*" etc., etc.

In the next item Columbus states the reasons for not detaining the ships till he might collect a greater amount of gold. The people are sick. The ships are lying in the harbor at a large expense. The weather is favorable to their return. He will need new supplies by the month of May, and there is no time to lose, etc. "*He has done well,*" is the marginal note.

Again, the gold mines could not be worked without greater conveniences. There must be shelter, provision against sickness, defence from Caonabo and his merciless savages who had sacked La Navidad. "*He has done well,*" is repeated in the margin.

But the people are improving in health and will soon be acclimated. "The small number of those who continue well are employed every day in barricading our dwelling so as to put it in a state of defence, and in taking necessary measures for the safety of our ammunition, which will be finished now in a few days, for all our fortifications will consist simply of stone walls (*albarrada*—meaning walls without mortar). With a little vigilance, small fortifications will do against the Indians. This done, he will examine the gold-bearing sands of the rivers in the interior, and build a town of defence. "*This is well and exactly as he should do,*" is the marginal response.

The sickness of the colony is in consequence of change of climate. Hence they must have the same food as formerly at home, fresh supplies of which should at once be sent and continued until the same could be produced in the new world. The sickness of the people and the lean and weak condition of the domestic animals had not admitted of a very extensive

plantation as yet, but such crops as had been tested were exceedingly promising, and the country was very beautiful.

The monarchs reply : “ *Since the land is so fertile, it is desirable to sow of all kinds as much as possible, and Don Juan de Fonsica is instructed to send over immediately everything requisite for that purpose.*”

The people are in need of wine on account of the leakage from bad casks, of biscuits, corn, and particularly of raisins, sugar, almonds, honey, and rice. There should be a larger stock of domestic animals of nearly all kinds. For the freighting of two caravels with those things, the gold now sent home should be discreetly appropriated, and everything must be expedited so as to get returns by May.

Their Highnesses will give instructions to Don Juan de Fonsica to make immediate inquiry respecting the imposition in the matter of the casks, etc., the dispatch of the business in general, etc.

As the next two items in this “memorial” are those concerning which Columbus has been most highly censured in more recent times, we will quote them in full.

“Item. You will tell their Highnesses that as we have no interpreter through whom we can make these people acquainted with our holy faith, as their Highnesses and we ourselves desire, and as we will do so soon as we are able, we send by these two vessels some of these cannibal men and women, as well as some children, both male and female, whom their Highnesses might order to be placed under the care of the most competent persons to teach them the language.

At the same time they might be employed in useful occupations, and by degrees, through somewhat more care being bestowed upon them than upon other slaves, they would learn one from the other. By not seeing or speaking to each other for a long time they will learn much sooner in Spain than they will here, and become much better interpreters. We will, however, not fail to do what we can; it is true that, as there is but little communication between one of these islands and another, there is some difference in their mode of expressing themselves, which mainly depends on the distance between them. But as, amongst all these islands, those inhabited by the cannibals are the largest and most populous, it must be evident that nothing but good can come from sending to Spain men and women who may thus one day be led to abandon their barbarous custom of eating their fellow-creatures. By learning the Spanish language in Spain they will much earlier receive baptism, and advance the welfare of their souls; moreover, we shall gain credit with the Indians who do not practice the above-mentioned cruel custom, when they see that we have seized and led captive those who injure them, and whose very name alone fills them with horror. You will assure their Highnesses that our arrival in this country and the sight of so fine a fleet have produced the most imposing effect for the present, and promise great security hereafter; for all the inhabitants of this great island, and of others, when they see the good treatment that we shall show to those who do well, and the punishment that we shall inflict on those who do wrong, will hasten to submit, so that we shall

be able to lay our commands on them as vassals of their Highnesses. And as even now they not only readily comply with every wish that we express, but also of their own accord endeavor to do what they think will please us, I think that their Highnesses may feel assured that, on the other side also, the arrival of this fleet has in many respects secured for them, both for the present and the future, a wide renown amongst all Christian princes, but they themselves will be able to form a much better judgment on this subject than it is in my power to give expression to."

"Let him be informed of what has transpired respecting the cannibals that came over to Spain. He has done well and let him do as he says, but let him endeavor by all possible means to convert them to our holy Catholic religion, and do the same with respect to the inhabitants of all the islands to which he may go."

"Item. You will tell their Highnesses that the welfare of the souls of the said cannibals, and of the inhabitants of this island also, has suggested the thought that the greater the number that are sent over to Spain the better, and this good service may result to their Highnesses in the following manner. Considering what great need we have of cattle and of beasts of burden, both for food and to assist the settlers in this and all these islands, both for peopling the land and cultivating the soil, their Highnesses might authorize a suitable number of caravels to come here every year to bring over the said cattle and provisions and other articles; these cattle, etc., might be sold at moderate prices for account of the bearers, and the latter might be paid with slaves taken from among

the Caribbees, who are a wild people fit for any work, well proportioned and very intelligent, and who, when they have got rid of the cruel habits to which they have become accustomed, will be better than any other kind of slaves. When they are out of their country they will forget their cruel customs, and it will be easy to obtain plenty of these savages by means of row-boats that we propose to build. It is taken for granted that each of the caravels sent by their Highnesses will have on board a confidential man, who will take care that the vessels do not stop anywhere else than here, where they are to unload and reload their vessels. Their Highnesses might fix duties on the slaves that may be taken over, upon their arrival in Spain. You will ask for a reply upon this point, and bring it to me in order that I may be able to take the necessary measures should the proposition merit the approbation of their Highnesses."

"The consideration of this subject has been suspended for a time, until fresh advices arrive from the other side; let the Admiral write what he thinks upon the subject."

Clearly enough, this is an out-and-out proposition on the part of Columbus to enslave the Caribbean cannibals, and shows that his ideas of personal freedom were not so far in advance of the world's thought as were his conceptions of cosmography. It is indeed a great merit for a man's judgment to be ahead of his time, but for a man to think and act simply abreast of his age surely is no cause of censure. And what could be more unjust than to judge any one by a standard hundreds of years in advance? In this latter part of the fifteenth century the African slave-trade was fairly

inaugurated and had the highest moral and religious sanction, and it has taken nearly all the centuries since to reach a universally clear conviction as to the wrong and general mischievousness of the system. American authors, who have still living among them thousands of human beings who once stood on the slave-block, as a part of the goods and chattels of the nation, are in an awkward predicament for condemning the world's hero of 1494 for not anticipating the decisions of the latter half of the nineteenth century. The argument used by Columbus, that the advantages of civilization and Christianity would offset the loss of personal freedom to a man-eating savage, finds its parallel at least in arguments offered in this country by politicians and learned divines within our own recollection.

But if the opinion of Columbus may be extenuated in the light, or rather in the darkness, of his age, the immediate hesitation as to accepting that opinion on the part of the monarchs, and their final decision to reject it—due mainly to the kindheartedness of Isabella, no doubt—may justly be regarded as a decision in advance of that age.

The remainder of the memorial is occupied with itemized statements concerning the purchase of certain vessels, the best manner of chartering caravels for the West Indies, the dishonest dealing of the horse-venders at Seville, the improper conduct of the horsemen in Hayti, the need of caution in sending out well-disposed persons to colonize the Indies, the need of more arms, etc., etc. But the most notable items are concerning certain benefits and privileges asked for Pedro Magarite

and Juan Aguado, from both of whom he afterward received exceedingly unkind treatment.

February 2, 1494, the fleet of twelve sail left for Spain. The quantity of gold carried back was not excessive, but the letters from Columbus, Friar Buil, Dr. Chanca, and others of influence, along with the personal report of Gorbolan,¹ sustained the hopes of the enterprise.

Sickness, hunger, and disappointment, on the side of the globe opposite home—in a wilderness of savages—were not very conducive to contentment, on the part of those whose terms of service had not expired, when the fleet spread its sails for the return. And two officials, so situated as to be able to make their evil influence felt, became leaders of such as were affected by the mutinous spirit. One was Bernal Diaz, comptroller of the colony, and the other was Fernin Cedo, the assayer of metals. The former could speak disparagingly of the small accounts which figured in the returns of this loud-trumpeted enterprise, and the other was wide-mouthed in crying down the gold which had raised such great expectations. Irving, following Bernaldez, says of the latter mutineer: "He pertinaciously insisted that there was no gold in the island, or at least that it was found in such inconsiderable quantities as not to repay the search. He declared that the large grains of virgin ore brought by the natives had been melted; that they

¹ The caciques led Gorbolan and his party "to a workshop where a goldsmith was beating out gold into very thin plates. The gold was laid on a cylindrical stone with highly polished surface. This artificer, possessing excellent skill in making wreaths and turbans (for the Indian women use these as sumptuous ornaments for their heads), was engaged in beating out to an extreme degree of tenuity a plate so large that to carry it would surpass the power of the strongest man." Such is Syllacius's report of Gorbolan's search for gold.

had been the slow accumulation of many years, having remained a long time in the families of the Indians, and handed down from generation to generation; which in many instances was probably the case. Other specimens, of a large size, he pronounced of a very inferior quality, and debased with brass by the natives. The words of this man outweighed the evidence of facts, and many joined him in the belief that the island was really destitute of gold. It was not until some time afterwards that the real character of Fermin Cedo was ascertained and the discovery made that his ignorance was at least equal to his obstinacy and presumption—qualities apt to enter largely into the compound of a meddling and mischievous man.”

That Columbus had grossly exaggerated the advantages of the newly discovered country, and so deceived the people in Spain in order to magnify his own importance, was the general charge. The immense resources of the West Indies, which have since enriched the world and administered incalculably to its luxuries, were entirely overlooked by these idle adventurers, who were only seeking for great fortunes in gold ready to hand. The flattering prospects of mining resources brought to light by Ojeda and Gorbolan were maliciously ignored; and Bernal Diaz, who had already had some variances with the Admiral, joined with several others as ringleaders, and resolved on seizing the ships remaining in the harbor and returning to Spain. This could be easily effected during the Admiral's illness, and the influence of Diaz at court would extenuate the mutinous movement, especially when it was known what great disappointment the colony had suffered.

But this plot, so fraught with mischief, was discovered, and in the process of investigation there was found tucked away in the buoy of one of the ships a most slanderous document prepared by Diaz against Columbus, for the prejudice of the court. The ringleaders were arrested, Diaz was imprisoned in one of the ships to be sent to Spain for trial, and others were punished in various ways, according to the degree of the guilt of each. In order to prevent any like occurrence afterwards, all the guns and munitions of war were taken out of four of the ships and placed in the fifth and largest, under the care of some of the most trustworthy persons in the colony. This first revolt is a fair sample of the spirit and conduct with which Columbus had to contend throughout his bitter trials in the Indies. Though the punishments he inflicted were mild, barely such as were necessary for the public safety, he was at once stigmatized as severe and tyrannical; and the fact that he was a foreigner, with merely newly-made friends and influence in Spain, was made to tell heavily against him, especially by such as had both friends and influence at home.

Nothing in the enterprises of this new world, in the estimation of Columbus, demanded his personal attention more than the development of the gold-mines in the mountains of Cibao. Having now recovered his health, home affairs at Isabella were organized with view to his absence. His brother, Diego, mild and pacific in temper rather than shrewd and firm, was placed in command of the infant city and the little fleet in the harbor. Other persons of influence constituted a board of counsellors.

The expedition to the mountains would require energy and skill, as well as a very considerable force. A fort must be built, the mines must be worked, and the natives must be impressed with the power and magnificence of the white man. A regular engineering and mining outfit, therefore, was necessary, and such military display as the Admiral could command. A startling sight in those verdant forests and plains of early spring—March 12th—must have been the 400 men which he led out in glistening steel, their ranks bristling with lances and cross-bows, their swords and arquebuses ready for death-dealing execution; and a novelty to this array itself must have been the multitude of Indians which hovered around and brought up the rear. The roll of the drum and the penetrating notes of the trumpet awaken the woodland echoes, and the movement is in regular rank and file. The first day's march is across the tropical plain from the sea to the mountains. As night came on, they encamped at the foot of the only convenient pass of the Monte Christi range in that vicinity. A mere Indian trail wound upward among the rocks, often well-nigh obstructed by bushes and tangled thickets. But by the close of the next day the enterprising young hidalgos had engineered and completed a convenient military road, after the manner of the road-making in the mountains of Granada during the recent Moorish war. This Gentleman's Pass, as it was called, has long since been obliterated by the rank-growing vegetation. The next day, having reached the mountain-top, a most enchanting view of an immense tropical vale opened before them—the same which had delighted Ojeda and his

company when prospecting for gold a short time before. In every direction, as far as the eye could reach, was this sea of verdure, bounded in the horizon by lofty mountain ranges. The meadows, half wild, half cultured, were robed in the tall rank grasses of the tropics; shrubs and climbing vines were forest-like in their exuberance; the stately palms and wide-spreading mahogany trees rose gigantic all over the far-reaching landscape; the smooth rivers, winding their way from the mountains to the sea, gleamed here and there through this wealth of the tropics, and at innumerable points rose the smoke of the native hamlet. On the impulse of the magnificent view, Columbus named this grand part of the island *Vega Real*, or the *Royal Vale*.

One cannot read the account of the descent of this miniature army into the plain without breathing something of the air of romance which must have entranced them on every side—without wishing one could have been there to enjoy the novel scene. From every direction the immense Indian population came out to see the sight—such a sight as had never come to them even in their wildest dreams. The regular step of well-drilled infantry, bearded and with rosy complexion, clad in the most brilliant colors and in polished steel; the weapons of war, so unlike the rude Indian lance or war-club, or bows and arrows chipped and scraped out with flint; the waving plumes, streaming banners and martial music, but, above all, the prancing cavalry which led the van—the simple-minded natives supposing, *Las Casas* tells us, that horse and rider constituted one being—the centaur of the ancients—and being sur-

prised beyond measure at the dismounting to see the double creature thus parcelled out—how all this must have made the poor naked Indian gape and stare! At first the astonished beings fled, leaving house and home without any protection, save the bars of slender reeds placed across the doorway of the wigwam, thinking the white men might understand that item of Indian etiquette, which thus forbade the entrance of a stranger. Columbus at once commanded a scrupulous regard for this simple contrivance. But the interpreters spoke their good words for the strangers, and the common trinket presents were distributed. Now the crowds came so thick and fast and brought such abundance of their victuals and drink that the Spaniards could scarcely make their way. They were surprised, moreover, to see how the Indians accompanying them would enter the houses they passed and appropriate whatever they wanted in the way of food, without let or hindrance. The common hospitality of the savage—always generous—was enhanced in this country, it would seem, by the abundant spontaneity of nature in providing for the simple wants of the natives.

Having made five leagues on the way across the plain, they reached the River Yagui, which Columbus named the River of Reeds, not knowing that it was the same which the year before, on the coast near Monte Christi, he had called the River of Gold from the shining particles seen in the sand. Here they encamped for the night, and the imagination points a happy scene when we are told that, enraptured with the charms of nature all about them, the hundreds

plunged into the river for that delightful and social recreation—a-diving and a-swimming in company. To one who has revelled in this sort of thing Michael Angelo's "Cartoon of Bathing Soldiers" will never lose its fascination. Scarcely less could have been the fun and frolic the next morning, when the river, too deep to ford, was crossed with canoes and rafts, while the horses were made to swim over.

Now follow two days more of the delightful march across what might be called, according to the description, the vale of paradise. Forest and stream have an endless variety, an endless charm of novelty, and some of the rivers which come down from Cibao have the glittering particles of gold in their sands. To that limpid stream in the bed of which one can admire the smooth round pebbles is given the name Rio Verde, on account of its emerald banks.

Everywhere the abundant native population give them the same generous reception. Conciliated by the interpreters, they return from their flight, find their wigwams, barricaded with reeds, unmolested, and do their utmost to feed and entertain the strangers.

At last they have crossed the Royal Vale, and look up the rugged heights of the mountains of Cibao, which means the mountain of rocks. If the aspect is not so luxurious and inviting, and the pass appears steep and difficult, the visions of gold teeming in those rocky summits will inspire the pioneers to open a road for the army early the next day. But these four hundred men, living here in the open air, with plenty of vigorous exercise, have ravenous appetites which will not be satisfied with the light and easily digested

food of the natives. The bread and wine, therefore, are disappearing at the most alarming rate, and some must go back with a company of mules to bring increased rations from Isabella.

The next morning they wind their way up, amidst broken and tumbled rocks, through an abrupt ravine, in a long strung-out line, leading their horses. Reaching the heights, they look backwards over the same charming landscape of such immense reach, the vale being, Las Casas says, eighty leagues long and twenty to thirty wide. Striking, indeed, must have been the contrast between the enchanting scene left behind and the rugged heights, towering toward heaven, all around them. As they were now some eighteen leagues from Isabella, and the mountain-passes were toilsome for transportation, the Admiral began to prospect for a location, which he did the more readily, since there was not only gold in the bottoms of the streams which cut their way down the ravines, but there were specimens of amber and of lapis lazuli, and possibly there were indications of mines of copper. Casting about, he found a sort of plateau among the declivities of these mountains, very fertile, and enlivened by the purling notes of a small river, its clear waters washing the most curious and bright-colored stones, aye, even large masses of elegant marble and bits of jasper. As it swept nearly around a sort of eminence, it would serve as a ditch to the fortress, very little further fortification being necessary. Here a strong wooden fortress, called St. Thomas, was built, the name being a playful reference to the incredulity of his enemies, the more appropriate since here the

gold could be seen with the eyes and touched with the hands.

Here, as elsewhere, the natives soon learned that gold was the great quest of the Spaniards, so they became very enterprising in procuring it. Some hurried away to the mountain streams, and sifted the sands till they procured quite an encouraging amount of the precious dust. All this they readily bartered for trinkets and gew-gaws. See that old man bring two pieces of ore an ounce in weight, delighted beyond measure in receiving a hawk's bell in return! Is the Admiral surprised at the size of these specimens? In his country, only a half day's journey distant, pieces could be found as big as an orange! While others, bringing grains of ten and twelve drachms, had seen masses as big as the head of a child! But the mine of golden wonders was always a long way off—in some hidden or out-of-the-way place.

While the Admiral was thus superintending the construction of the fortress, Juan de Luxan, a young cavalier of Madrid, was assigned the task of exploring this mountain province, supposed to be about as large as the kingdom of Portugal. Before long he and his small band of armed men returned with a decidedly interesting account of things. Cibao was indeed a mountainous country, but it abounded in excellent pasturage, the frequent showers in that elevated region bringing on such a luxuriant growth of grass as frequently reached their saddles in riding through. Then there were many plateaus susceptible of cultivation, and the aromatic plants and trees! There must be an abundance of spices in this region. As to

grapes, it was the very land of promise. The vines climbed to the tree-tops, bearing an abundance of the most juicy and delicious clusters. Moreover, each valley and glen had its mountain stream, bringing down the shining gold-dust! And had not the Indians let De Luxan into the secret as to where to find the streams richest in gold, and where the best mines were? But on these points no one but the Admiral could share his secret.

The fortress being completed, Pedro Margarite was made commander of the garrison, numbering fifty-six. Returning to Isabella, the Admiral met the Spaniards on the return with supplies on the banks of Rio Verde. They examined the river to find a ford, and the Admiral was planning the best route from the new settlement to the gold regions. He now resided for some time in the Indian villages, cultivating the acquaintance and learning the habits of these people. He found that in many instances, especially where they came in contact with the raiding attacks of the Caribs, they were much more warlike than he had supposed. He also found that he had been mistaken in supposing that they were without any religion. They believed in a supreme deity and in a regular and immense order of mediators, called *Zemes*, which they represented by rudely fashioned idols. Each cacique had his idol or *Zeme*, which he kept in a sort of wigwam temple set apart for the purpose. These were their tutelary deities, whose influence they propitiated. They had their priesthood, their processions, and their rude worship. If any one managed to get possession of the image of another's *Zeme*, the influ-

ence of the deity was transferred accordingly. These people, like the heathen in general, had very absurd notions about the creation, believing, for instance, that the sun and moon issued out of a cave in their island. They seem to have had in general some conception of an immortality or future state. Sometimes the caciques practised gross impositions on their people, hiding a confidant in some corner of the temple, who then spoke through the image by means of a hollow tube. As is frequently the case among savages, the priesthood dabbled in the healing art, using herbs as simples, rather than according to intelligent combination of the healing virtues of plants.¹

During his sojourn with the inhabitants of the Vega Real, the busy Admiral must have been impressed with their idle and easy mode of life. A slight tillage of the soil would produce all the maize, potatoes, and yucca roots which, in addition to the fishes, reptiles, and abundant spontaneity of native fruits, would fully supply their frugal wants. Except in the colder altitudes of the mountains, the temperature was never severe enough to suggest the need of a covering;² and as the naked human form was as proper to their eyes as the common objects in nature, and perhaps more beautiful than tree or flowers, why should they toil or spin? That costly and elaborate thing which we call a house their genial climate and simple tastes did not call for, except in its simplest and most rudimentary

¹A full account of absurdities of the religious belief of the natives may be found between chapters 62 and 63 of the biography of Fernando Columbus.

²In the colder, mountain regions it would seem that the natives kept themselves warm in winter by an excess of flesh diet well seasoned with red peppers.

forms. They lounged, chatted, laughed, danced and sung, every day being, no doubt, a happy pastoral to the more thoughtful and æsthetic of these children of nature. Occasionally the war-club, the rude lance, and the bow and arrow had to be taken up against the incursion of the fierce Caribs, but the nearer neighbors were so peaceful among themselves as to be a model to many civilized nations; and that common terror of savage countries, the ferocious wild beast, was not known. How often we turn with delectation to that charming picture of this region given from the pen of Peter Martyr. "The island enjoyed perpetual springtime, and was blessed with continual summer and harvest. The trees preserved their leaves throughout the year, and the meadows continued always green." * * * "There is no province nor any region which is not remarkable for the majesty of its mountains, the fruitfulness of its vales, the pleasantness of its hills and delightful plains, with abundance of fair rivers running through them. There never was any noisome animal found in it, nor yet any ravening four-footed beast; no lion nor bear, no fierce tigers, nor crafty foxes, nor devouring wolves, but all things blessed and fortunate."

Columbus reached Isabella on the 29th of March. "The plants and fruits of the 'Old World,' which he was endeavoring to introduce into the island," says Irving, "gave promise of rapid increase. The orchards, fields, and gardens were in a great state of forwardness. The seeds of various fruits had produced young plants; the sugar-cane had prospered exceedingly; a native vine, trimmed and dressed with care, had yielded

grapes of tolerable flavor, and cuttings from European vines already began to form their clusters. On the 30th of March a husbandman brought to Columbus ears of wheat which had been sown in the latter part of January. The smaller kind of garden herbs came to maturity in sixteen days, and the larger kind, such as melons, gourds, pumpkins, and cucumbers, were fit for the table within a month after the seed had been put into the ground. The soil, moistened by brooks and rivers and frequent showers and stimulated by an ardent sun, possessed those principles of quick and prodigal fecundity which surprise the strangers, accustomed to less vigorous climates."

Columbus had scarcely reached Isabella, when a messenger was at his heels from Port St. Thomas, bearing evil tidings. Would the scenes of La Navidad be re-enacted? Once more his good instructions had been disregarded. Lust for gold and for the Indian women had again betrayed the Spaniards into such courses as to sadly shake the confidence of the natives in them as celestial beings. Instead of their usual cordiality, therefore, the Indians were shunning the white man and were abandoning their villages in the neighborhood, while evidences were not wanting that the fierce and wily Caonabo was assembling his war forces among the mountains.

But what had Columbus to fear from these naked, timid savages? Were they not in mortal terror of fire-arms and of his steel-clad soldiers mounted on their war-horses? He would reinforce Margarite with twenty men, would send him more bread and gun-powder; this, with thirty men detailed to open a road

between Isabella and St. Thomas, would suffice for the safety of this gold-mining interest.

Far more serious was the outlook at Isabella. The humid climate, reeking with the malarial decay of the rankest vegetation under a tropical sun, was telling on the delicately reared constitutions from the old soil of Europe. This infant city of the New World, founded in such bright hopes, was become a hospital without conveniences. What was the scanty supply of medicines and the few physicians for such a multitude shaking with chills and burning with fevers? The terrible emergencies of inexperienced pioneer life were putting all hands, even to hidalgos and priests, under the severest requisitions of hard labor. Who, then, could minister to the wants of the sick, formerly accustomed to the most delicate attentions? Of the rather scanty supply of provisions, much had spoiled through carelessness. The whole community, therefore, must be put on rations. The mind, too, was quite as sick as the body. A more bitterly disappointed people never existed. They had left home for the high civilization and the luxuries of the Orient, and had landed in a wilderness of savages. By conquest and trade, they had expected to appropriate every kind of wealth and luxury ready to hand. But gold, the quantity doubtful and the quality spoken against, was obtainable only by the laborious processes of the miner. The sparkling gems, the silken fabrics, and the costly spices were wholly wanting—unless it were the fiery agi-peppers of the natives. Even bread did not exist in this country, and the hungry, half-starving, whether sick or well, must supplement their mouldy bread from Spain with cassava,

fish, and lizards till grain could be grown and mills built and the baker's art flourish in the wilderness. Ah! everything the heart wished was on the other side of the vast ocean sea—on the other side of the globe! The death of the disappointed and heart-broken must have been a daily occurrence. The living, perhaps, even envied the dying. The Spaniard of high-blood, with blistered hands and sun-burnt brow, in the toil and moil of digging and building, cursed the day when he left the sure advantages of old Spain for the phantom hopes of this new country.

And who was the cause of all of this incurable misery? This upstart foreigner—this “gay deceiver”—now Admiral, and would-be king of a new realm at the cost of the treasure and the best blood of Spain! Some of the gay young hidalgos refuse to fall into the ranks of laboring men, and Friar Buil is indignant that he and his household must needs submit to limited rations of mouldy bread, along with the common people. But this Genoese is a severe disciplinarian, and, without partiality or pity, demands that “If any man will not work, neither shall he eat,” and in the privations of the colony there shall be no “respect of persons.”

No degree of resolution could close the eyes of the Admiral to the perils of his situation. While he was a comparative stranger in Spain, many of these malcontents had influence, and might readily turn the tide of royal and public favor against him and his enterprise. Some diversion of the community, therefore, must at once be brought about in order to avert imminent danger. To this end he planned a sort of military and exploring expedition to the interior. Ojeda was to

relieve Margarite at Fort St. Thomas, and the latter was to lead out all who could possibly be spared from business and the care of the sick, which proved to be two hundred and fifty with the cross-bow, one hundred and ten with arquebuses, and sixteen horsemen with lances, all of which were led by twenty officers. This commander, at once knight and nobleman, might surely be trusted to explore Cibao and other parts of the island.

Columbus's letter of instructions to him discovers his usual sagacity. While the Indians should be compelled to respect the rights of property vested in the white men, and should be duly punished for every kind of theft, they themselves must be treated with the utmost justice and discretion, and must be protected from insult, their confidence and friendship being thus secured. When the army needed supplies, these must be purchased regularly by one appointed by the Admiral. If the natives refused to sell, making it necessary to take the provisions by force, it must be done gently, even with kindness and caresses. Individual traffic with them must be forbidden lest the privilege be abused. It must always be borne in mind that the sovereigns are more desirous of the conversion of the Indians than of any riches to be derived from them. The army must be kept together and under thorough discipline, thus guarding against the savages, who, though cowardly indeed, might become very treacherous and cruel.

As to Caonabo and his brothers, they were artful and dangerous, and if the utmost deceit and strategy of war were necessary to their capture, these might be

considered justifiable in the case of foes so sanguinary and dangerous.

The march of Ojeda's miniature army—a little less than four hundred—to Fort St. Thomas was not without incident. On reaching the Vega Real he found that three Spaniards, on their return from the fort in the mountains, had been robbed by five Indians sent as guides by a cacique in the neighborhood. These Indians, attempting to carry the white men's clothes over the river at the ford, turned back when about half way across, taking the clothes with them. The cacique, instead of punishing them, appropriated the clothes and refused to restore them. Ojeda captured one of the offenders and brought him to the public square—so common to the Indian village—and had his ears cut off in true Spanish style. Then arresting the cacique, with his son and nephew, sent them in chains to Isabella, according to the summary military method of that day.

The terrified prisoners were followed by a friendly cacique, who pleaded for their forgiveness on the ground of some kindness which he had formerly shown the Spaniards. The Admiral appeared deaf to entreaty, and ordered the prisoners to the public square, their hands bound behind them, their crime to be publicly proclaimed and their heads struck off. Perhaps the execution was not intended to take place, but merely a sufficient scare of the poor savages to deter them from further theft. At the place appointed for the execution the assurances for good conduct in the future and the tearful entreaties of the mediating cacique were so moving as to make it easy for the

Admiral to exercise clemency. The lives of the offenders were spared.

Before the parties had time to disperse, a horseman arrived from St. Thomas, who affirmed that in passing the house of the cacique whose fault had just been condoned he had rescued five Spaniards who had been taken by the natives, over four hundred of them fleeing at the sight of his horse. Surely there was not much to fear from this sort of people, as long, at least, as horses could be had.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SOUTH SIDE OF CUBA EXPLORED.

WE are unfavorably impressed with the overmastering passion of Columbus for gold. "The excellence and power of the gold of Ophir," he says, "cannot be described; he who possesses it does what he will in this world; nay, it even enables him to draw souls from purgatory to paradise." But we must not conceive of him as standing alone in his ardent search for the precious metal. The sovereigns of Spain, and, indeed, the whole Spanish nation, were clamoring at his back for gold, and in the astonishing sentence above quoted he simply mirrored the sentiment of his age. After locating his colony, his next enterprise had been to build the fortress St. Thomas, in the regions of the gold-mines of Cibao, in order to develop that mining interest. Next to the accumulation of gold the great desideratum with Columbus and his sovereigns was the further exploration of the new country. Portugal had reached the Cape of Good Hope, and would be crowding all sail for India. Columbus, having taken the more direct route to the westward, supposed that he was already in India. Which nation, then, would be able to appropriate the greater part of this much-desired country—this golden dream of the age? By all means, the Admiral must push directly for the heart of India—for the seat of the Grand Khan.

First, however, the good order of things at Isabella must be secured. Hence Diego, the brother of Columbus, is placed at the head of affairs, as president of a council, of which Father Buil and three others are members.

Three of the smaller vessels, caravels, are fitted up for the exploration of the south side of Cuba, as this immense territory is supposed to be an extension of the mainland of India. Cathay, the supposed name of a city and also of a province, was the part of the dominion of the Grand Khan in quest, which, "as described by John de Mandeville and others who have seen it," says Bernaldez, "is the richest province in the world and the most abundant in gold and silver and the other metals and silks."

The two larger vessels were left in the harbor, as they might be inconvenient for entering bays and rivers. April 24th, 1494, the little fleet put out to the westward. The Admiral called at the site of La Navidad, hoping for an interview with Guacanagari, but the chieftain seemed to be shunning him. On the 29th he made for the shores of Cuba. Having reached the eastern end of that island, he coasted westward along the south side. Some twenty leagues forward he entered a grand harbor. A narrow, winding, deep channel led to a beautiful sheet of water, resembling a lake surrounded by mountains. The great tropical forest which clothed the long reaches of ascent were laden alike with blossoms and with fruit. "In this country," says Bernaldez, "the trees and plants bear fruit twice in the year, and from the fruits a most delicious odor arose, which could be perceived at some

distance on the water. There were no habitations in this harbor, but as they went in they saw several fires burning close to the water, and a dog and two beds, but no men. They landed, and found more than four quintals of fish upon spits before the fires, and rabbits and two serpents, and very near they saw at the foot of the trees in many places a great many serpents, the most nasty, hideous, ugly creatures that any human being ever saw, all with their mouths sewed up. They were all of the color of dry wood, the skin of the whole body very much wrinkled, especially on the head, where it came down over the eyes, which were terribly venomous, and all were covered with very hard shells like scales of a fish, and from the head to the end of the tail, along the middle of the body, were long ugly projections, sharp as points of diamonds." As may be seen from the writer's own statements, these were not serpents, but the famous iguana, still a noted article of food in those parts.

This banquet, preparing in so romantic a spot, had been suddenly abandoned at the strange sight of the ships. What could this frightful ocean phantom be?

The hungry Spaniards fell upon the savory feast. The fish and the rabbit-like *utias* they devoured with the utmost relish, but those huge lizard-shaped iguanas! Who but an Indian could taste those? And yet Peter Martyr tells us they were to the natives what pheasants and peacocks were to the grandees of Spain. A common Indian did not aspire to them.

The repast over, the Spaniards rove about the woods in the vicinity. Behold, from the top of yonder high rock the curious eyes of some seventy natives look

down upon them. As the rosy-faced strangers attempt to approach them the multitude vanishes in the thick woods and in the gorges of the mountains. No; there is one whose curiosity is too much for him. He lingers about, gazing at the strangers and won by their friendly pantomimes. The Lucayan interpreter advances with his usual good word for the white men. He is understood, and the native runs to tell the good news to his people. Now they all come pouring down from the rocks and defiles of the forests in the most confident and respectful manner. Through the Lucayan they explain their enterprise to Columbus. Their cacique is about to entertain a neighboring cacique, and has sent them to procure the banquet, which they are now making ready for transportation. The fishes and meats will not spoil so readily after being roasted. But what will they do now after the ravages which the Spaniards have made? Oh! that is a mere trifle. One night's fishing will replace all. The Admiral insists, however, on making compensation, and shaking hands in European style, they part in the happiest mood. "He inquired of the Indians," says Bernaldez, "whether it (Cuba) was an island or a continent, but they are a stupid race, who think that all the world is an island, and do not know what a continent is; who have no written language nor records of antiquity, and delight in nothing else but in eating and in women; and so they said that it was an island, though some said it was an island which he could not sail around in forty moons.

"The next day, before sunrise, the Admiral set sail from this place, towards the west, following the coast of the country, which they saw to be very beautiful and

thickly settled. As they perceived the vessels, great numbers of men and boys, small and great, came running to the shore to see them, bringing bread and other things to eat, showing the bread and gourds full of water, and crying, 'Eat, take, people from heaven!' They asked them to land and go to their houses, and some came in their canoes for the same purpose. In this way they sailed along until they came to a gulf where there was a vast number of villages, and the lands and fields all looked like the most beautiful gardens in the world, the land being elevated and mountainous." Here the Spaniards spend a night, and the natives, with their usual kindness, overwhelm them with hospitality.

But how about gold? Where was it to be found? In a great island to the south, say the Indians. This may be Babeque, for which the Admiral searched so diligently in his former voyage along the north side of Cuba. And still the natives pointed to the great island in the south as the place where the Spaniards might find gold. This was too much for the Admiral. He turned his prow out into the wide ocean, May 23d. in hope of finding the gold region.

It was not long before the unmistakable signs of land appeared in the horizon. But the ships made slow progress, and it was two days and nights before the cloud-like mountain-tops were converted into *terra firma*, with the usual enchanting scenery of mountains, vales, rivers, harbors, and multitudes of natives—all awaiting possession.

But what a scene is here! A fleet of some seventy canoes, bristling with savages painted in all colors,

feather-decorated, brandishing their lances and yelling as if to tear their throats, is flying out towards the ships. One of the canoes ventures nearer than the rest, so near that the Lucayan can address the inmates. Kind words and a few presents conciliate the whole company, so that the Admiral's ships move on unmolested.

The vessels cast anchor in a harbor about midway along the north shore of Jamaica. "The gardens of Valencia are not to be compared to any part of this whole island," says Bernaldez, "so the Admiral named the harbor 'Santa Gloria.'" At daybreak the next morning they were under way again, in search of a harbor sufficiently sheltered to enable the Admiral to careen and caulk his ship, which was leaking badly. A good harbor was soon found, but when a boat was sent towards it two large canoes met them in a most hostile manner. They did not come near enough, however, to reach the Spaniards with their sharp wooden lances which they hurled so furiously. The boat returned, and, as the water was so deep, the ship entered and cast anchor. At once the entire beach became a lively scene. A multitude of painted savages, mostly black, but exhibiting also a variety of colors, some partly dressed in palm leaves, all more or less decked out with feathers, rent the air with their war-whoops, and hurled their javelins at the ships.

This cannot be tolerated. These savages must be made to respect the power of the white men. A boat-load of well-armed men makes towards the shore, and discharging a shower of arrows from their cross-bows, thus wounding several of the natives, the painted host

retreats pell-mell into the forests. The Spaniards pursue with their deadly flights of arrows, "and a dog which had leaped from one of the vessels followed them," says Bernaldez, "and bit them; for one dog against the Indians is worth ten men." This treatment brought the poor savages to terms. Columbus was allowed to land and take peaceful possession of the island, which he named Santiago. Happily, the pretty Indian name, Jamaica, has been retained. The beautiful harbor, shaped like a horseshoe, is called Puerto Bueno.

The remainder of the day everything was perfectly quiet. The next morning, before sunrise, six Indians were seen making friendly gestures on the shore. They had been sent by the caciques to make overtures of peace with the strangers. The Admiral responded most cordially, and the usual trinkets were sent to the chieftains. This proved conciliating. Very soon the shore swarmed with the painted multitudes. This time they brought provisions—articles similar to those brought by the natives of the other islands, but of better quality.

There were now three days of friendly intercourse and trade. As the Spaniards studied these savages, they came to regard them as decidedly in advance of the inhabitants of the neighboring islands. They were quite at home on the sea. "They have more canoes here," says Bernaldez, "and larger than in any other region hitherto discovered, each made in one piece from the trunk of a tree, and each cacique in all that neighborhood has a large canoe, which he takes as much pride in using as a nobleman here

would take in keeping a large and beautiful ship. They have them wrought from stem to stern with various figures and paintings, so that their beauty is admirable. The Admiral measured one of the large ones, which was 96 feet long and 8 feet wide."

These people were also quite warlike in their disposition and habits, thus resembling the Caribs. All their utensils were after the same pattern as those found in the other islands, but they were of better workmanship.

As the ships proceeded along the coast to the westward, the natives were constantly coming out in their canoes to greet them and to keep up their kind of traffic. Beads, bells, and red caps were all celestial articles in their estimation, and far exceeded in value the cassava-bread, fish, fruits, and water—all of which was alike common with them. When the squadron reached the west end of the island, the wind being favorable to a direct course to Cuba, and there being no very flattering prospects of gold in Jamaica, it was decided to make for the former shore, it being regarded, of course, as a part of the mainland of Asia.

How we wish we knew more about that enterprising Indian youth who begged the privilege of sailing with the Admiral. As "every human heart is human," his relatives were distressed at his adventure; but, resolving to evade the tearful entreaties of his sisters, he hid himself away in one of the ships. We hope he was treated with special kindness, as the Admiral directed.

May 18th Columbus reached Cuba. The cacique of the village where he landed had long since heard of

him. Indeed, the intelligence of his former visit on the other side of the island seems to have spread quite generally, so that the Spaniards were now anticipated at every point as wonderful beings come down from the skies.

As the ships sailed westward they found the shore bending to the northeast for many leagues, then west again, thus forming an immense bay. Here the water was shallow and there was a most terrific thunder-storm. The situation was perplexing, for in such thunder and lightning one should strike sail, and yet the shoal water required the sails to be spread. Fortunately, the storm was soon over.

Now the shoals, sand-banks, and small islands became so numerous as to make sailing very difficult, and the sailor at the mast-head proclaimed a sea of islands stretching away to the horizon. Some were mere sand-banks, others were green and treeless, and others, especially those near the shore, were clothed with forests grand as those of the adjacent shores. The Admiral undertook to give a name to each island, but the number was so immense—160 counted in one day—that he was content to name the mass the *Queen's Gardens*. Would it not be well to sail outside of this archipelago? But did not Sir John Mandeville and Marco Polo number the islands along the coast of Asia by the thousands? Surely he must now be among them; hence it would not be wise to diverge from the shore, which must be Cathay, the territory of the Grand Khan. How like fairy-land, and therefore how like the supposed India, these verdant islands were. Those sweet odors borne on every breeze surely sug-

gested the land of spices. Here was the luxuriant foliage and the magnificent flora of the tropics. The stately groups of flamingoes clad in bright scarlet, and the tortoises coming from an egg not unlike that of a hen and growing to the size of a soldier's buckler, are all reminders of the grandeur of the Orient.

But the navigation is exceedingly difficult. Now the keels of the ships grate on the sand, now thump against rocks, and now a counter-current fairly turns the small crafts about. They sail successively to every point of the compass. Every foot of the way must be tested. The man at the roundtop must keep a sharp lookout every minute, the lead must be thrown continually, and not infrequently the channel becomes so narrow that the sails must be dropped and the vessels towed on by means of the row-boats; and still they ran aground, and were gotten off with great labor.

The weather, too, was very peculiar. At sunrise the wind blew from the east, and it followed the course of that great luminary throughout the day. At sunset it was calm. But very soon thunder-clouds gathered, with sheets of lightning and rumbling in the distance. As the moon arose a breeze came off the land scattering these threatening cloud-banks with a mere shower. This order of phenomena was an every-day occurrence.

But while vegetable life of the greatest variety and beauty abounds in these islands, and birds of the most brilliant plumage and those charming in song are multitudinous, neither voice nor form of any human being is to be discovered. For days they sail amidst a magnificent solitude. At length, on the 22d of May,

they find human habitations on one of the islands, but they are completely deserted. As usual, the Indians have fled in terror at the strange sight of the ships. Let us tarry for a few moments in these remote habitations of the American savage. Here is an abundance of fish, that staple article of food with primitive man. Outside are piles of "kitchen middens," mostly tortoise shells. As living domestic appurtenances, here are tame parrots chattering and flamingoes stalking about. Those dumb dogs, found elsewhere as we have seen, are being fattened for food, and are as savory to the Spaniards as "kids in Castile."

As they go on they discover the natives in the act of fishing, and very remarkable, indeed, is the process. Somewhat after the manner of ancient falconry, they are making one kind of fish catch other kinds. The *Histoire* claiming to be written by Fernando Columbus says: "They had tied some small fishes they call *reves* by the tail, which run themselves against other fishes, and with a certain roughness which they have from the head to the middle of the back they stick so fast to the next fish they meet that when the Indians perceive it, drawing their line, they draw them both together, and it was a tortoise our men saw so taken by these fishermen, that fish clinging about the neck of it, where they generally fasten, being by that means safe from the other fish biting them. I have seen them fasten upon vast sharks." This mode of fishing has been reported by other navigators, and occurs also in other parts of the world—for instance, at Mozambique, on the east coast of Africa, and at Madagascar. The "rough-

ness" which these capturing fishes have "from the head to the middle of the back" is said to consist of suckers, which become attached to the throat of the fish to be caught, or the under shell of a tortoise, and adhere so firmly that very large game may thus be secured.

When the natives were done fishing they came to the Spaniards in the most fearless manner and inquired what they were after. They also offered them their supply of fish just taken and about everything else they had, but Columbus was content with taking simply the fish, for which he paid them.

Wearied with the difficulties of navigation in this archipelago, the Admiral at length emerged into the open sea and steered toward a mountainous part of the coast of Cuba. Here, June 3d, he found a considerable village of the natives. They were exceedingly pacific and communicative. Columbus thought them even more cordial than the inhabitants of the other islands. They also seemed to give special attention to their domestic animals, which were in better condition than others found in those regions. While the crews took in water, intercourse went on with the venerable cacique and other aged men around him, and the interview was most impressive. "Was Cuba an island?"—the most vital question now, of course, with the Admiral. The cacique answered that he was an old man and had known other old men in his time who understood such matters, and he had never heard it said that it had any end. Others thought that a ship could not reach the end of it in forty moons. But the province of Mangon lay just to the westward, and there the

people could inform him further. Mangon!—most significant sound to the ear of the Admiral. That must be “Mangi”! the celebrated province of the Grand Khan. He must know all about Mangon. And right well can these natives inform him. They know that these people of Mangon have tails, and wear long garments to cover them up. Why else should they wear clothing? Surely there was nothing in nature of which to be ashamed? How striking! Did not Sir John Mandeville say that the inhabitants of Mangi had tails, and so, contrary to the custom of their rude neighbors, wore long clothing? Surely now he must be approaching Tartary!

After being well feasted on the fat pigeons furnished by the natives, the squadron sailed away into an immense stretch of open sea along the charming mountainous coast. Everything was now bright with hope. These illusive hours constituted some of the most gala-days of poor Columbus. Each day repeats the same delectations. The ever-varying landscape of mountain, valley, river, and peaceful Indian village is on the right. The clear, dark sea, dark because of its great depth, reaches away to the horizon on the left. At every headland and in every bay the natives anticipate them. They come out in their swift canoes laden with fruits and the good things of the land generally. They even swim out to the ships in order to meet these people from heaven. The evening breezes, with their soft showers, bring sweet odors from the land, and the still sweeter songs of the jubilant villagers, feasting and dancing at this great event of the arrival of the ships from the skies. The Admiral is living in

the very third heaven of hope and joy, the balmy nights passing as if they were but a single hour.

After passing the beautiful Gulf of Xagna, they sail into water white as milk, from the fine sand kept afloat by the agitations of the water. Then come numerous islands again, as numerous as the Gardens of the Queen, and the navigation is exceedingly difficult. The smallest caravel going ahead, the rest follow with the utmost caution. A caravel, sent to the main in search of water, reports the shores low and muddy, and the trees so thick that they look like a solid wall. A cat could not go on shore at that place. Again they are in clear open water, and steer for the mountainous coast. They anchor in a fine harbor in order to fill the water-casks.

The wood-choppers are cutting their wood, and the drawers of water filling their casks, when one who had strayed away into the forest with his cross-bow in search of game returns in a breathless terror. He has met a most weird and startling sight—some one in a long white garment, looking like a grave friar of St. Mary of Mercy. Two others followed with white frocks down to their knees, and a little farther away were coming about thirty similar personages, armed with clubs and lances. Nor were they the common tawny skins of the island, but of fair complexion like Europeans.

At this startling report all the hewers of wood and drawers of water fled in utmost precipitation to the ships.

But the story had no ghostly alarm for Columbus. It was but another item in the remarkable list of cor-

respondence between his findings and the accounts of Mandeville and Polo. These must, indeed, be the people of Mangi, who put on clothes in order to cover their tails. On the following day some forty, under arms, were hustled off into the wild interior in search of these people dressed in white. And they must go till they find them, even if the journey be forty miles. A dismal tramp this party had through almost impenetrable forests, over broad plains of gigantic grasses and shrubbery, where there was not even the track of a wild beast. Scarcely more than a mile had they gone, when they became almost exhausted and were obliged to return.

The next day another party was sent out in a different direction. They travelled but little farther than their comrades of the day before, and with no better result. They very soon became alarmed at the tracks of some huge animal in the sand, the sharp claw-prints of which were indicative of the lion to some, while others thought them the footprints of the griffin, a fabulous animal, having the body and claws of a lion and the head and wings of an eagle. This creature had been frequently referred to by Cardinal Iliaco, that favorite author of Columbus; and Glanville, in a work well known to him, had described it as keeping guard over the mountains abounding in gems and gold. On their return, the party was startled by a flock of huge cranes, twice the size of those in Europe. How aromatic were the impenetrable forests, and the shrubbery of the meadows was most charmingly festooned with the wild-grape vine, laden with fruit. Like the ancient spies sent by Moses into Canaan, who

returned with the grapes of Eschol, the Spaniards came bearing the luscious native fruit.

As to the people in long white garments, they were, without doubt, a flock of great white herons, so common in that region; and the tracks in the sand—"tracks of some very large beast, with five claws (a terrible sight!) which they judged to be lion's, or griffin's, or some other wild beast"—were probably those of the alligator. How much natural history has done to solve the mysteries of the superstitions of former times!

As the account given by Bernaldez, who appears to have talked this whole matter over with Columbus at his fireside, is here particularly lucid, we will copy a few paragraphs from him. He says: "The Admiral, having thus crossed over from Point Serafin, where the land declined towards the east to the mountains at the north, followed the coast back towards the east till he saw that it joined the other and was continuous with it, and then turned again to the west; and, although both the vessels and the men were much worn by the voyage, he proposed to sail for some mountains which he had seen in the west at the distance of thirty-five leagues from the place where they had taken in their supply of water. After they had gone nine leagues, they came to a beach, where they captured the cacique of the region, who, being an ignorant person that had never been away from these mountains, told them that towards the north the sea was very deep for a very great distance. They weighed anchor, and proceeded on their voyage very joyful, thinking to find it as he had said. But, after sailing several

leagues, they found themselves entangled among a number of islands, with very little depth of water, so that they could not find a convenient channel by which to go on. After making their way for a day and a half through a very narrow and shallow channel, they were obliged to drag the vessels, by means of their anchors and capstans, over the bottom, nearly a fathom out of water, for two full leagues, after which they found two fathoms and a half of water, in which they sailed for two days, and farther on three fathoms. At this place there came to the vessels many canoes, the people in which said that the inhabitants of those mountains had a king of great authority, and they seemed to be wonderfully impressed with the extent of his dominion and the greatness of his power, saying that he had infinite provinces, that he was called 'Holy,' and that he wore a white tunic, which trailed upon the ground." How suggestive! Must this not indeed be Prester John?

"They pursued their course along the coast, in three fathoms of water, for four days, in which they passed the mountains, leaving them far to the east, and always found the shore low and the trees growing close to the water's edge, as has been described, so that it was impossible to effect a landing. At the end of this time, the vessels being in a bay where the coast turned again to the east, they saw upon a cape, at twenty leagues distance, some very high mountains, which the Admiral determined to visit, since the sea was not open towards the north, and was of very great depth, as the cacique had said, who also told the Admiral that in the way in which he was going he would not

come to the end of the land in fifty leagues—so he had heard it said. They sailed within a great many islands, and, after four days and nights, came to the mountains they had seen, and found a country as large as the island of Corsica. They went all around it, but found no spot where they could land, the shore being very muddy and the trees very thick, as has been said of the other places, and the smokes from the dwellings of the inhabitants in the interior were large and numerous. They remained on this coast seven days seeking for fresh water, of which they were in want, and which they found at a place towards the east, in some beautiful palm-groves, where they also found mother-of-pearl and some very handsome pearls, and saw also that there were excellent fishing grounds, if they were only used. After supplying themselves with wood and water, they sailed towards the south for a considerable distance, following the coast until it led them towards the southwest, and appeared to run in that direction for a great number of days' sail, and at the south they saw the sea filled with islands. The vessels were in very bad condition from thumping about in the shallows, their ropes and tackle worn out, and most of the provisions much injured, especially the biscuit, in consequence of the leakiness of the vessels; and the men, too, were very much exhausted, afraid of their provisions failing, and likewise of the winds being, at this season, unfavorable for their return."

Somewhere along here the crews were surprised at the great numbers of enormous tortoises, which covered the sea in countless numbers. There were also in-

credibly large flights of cormorants, or sea-crows, fairly darkening the sky, and what a sight must have been those clouds of brilliant butterflies, which filled the air for a whole day, until the evening showers dispersed them.

As illustrating the enterprising imagination of Columbus, Bernaldez says: "While on this voyage, it occurred to him that if he should be prospered he might succeed in returning to Spain by the east, going to the Ganges, thence to the Arabian gulf, thence by land from Ethiopia to Jerusalem and to Joppa, where he might embark on the Mediterranean, and arrive at Cadiz." But this bold suggestion could never have been more than a thought—could never have been a definite and determined plan.

But that magnificent shore, stretching away illimitably to the southwest, just as Marco Polo had described India, must lead to the Golden Chersonesus so attractive to the ancients—that country now supposed to be the peninsula of Malacca. But the Admiral was confronted by stubborn facts—hungry, tired sailors and worn-out, leaky ships. Besides, who in all these crews—some eighty souls—shared his enthusiasm in Oriental discovery? Where was there another imagination which could conceive such brilliant pictures and such vast schemes as those which were constantly arising to his vision?

No; unwilling as he may be, he must turn back!—even though he is so near the west end of the great island that "a ship-boy from the masthead might have overlooked the group of islands to the south, and beheld the open sea beyond," and two or three days

further sail would have rounded Cape San Antonio. How different then would have been his geographical conceptions, which remained a grand delusion till the day of his death ! How vastly different might have been his exploring expeditions in the few after years of his life !

Yet the ships do not turn about easily, teredo-bored and crazy though they be. Many an eager look is cast down along that immense trend of southwest coast. What if it should prove to be the Golden Chersonesus just under the ships' prows ? Or what if they were, indeed, only nearing the end of an immense island ?

But this must surely be the eastern extension of a continent—the continent of Asia. Had they not coasted three hundred and thirty leagues westward, according to the estimates of the pilots ? Who had ever heard of an island of such immense magnitude ? And did not everything, especially that great extent of southwestward coast-line, correspond to an iota with the descriptions and accounts of India as given by Polo and Mandeville ? Aye, those columns of smoke arising here and there throughout the mountains and hills of the interior might be from the fires of the ruder outlying parts of *Mangi* and *Cathay*.

But in a matter so important, so vital to the magnitude of his enterprises, he will not depend merely upon his own opinion in making out an official report to the court of Spain. Every soul in the three ships must record his conviction under oath. Who could tell what crookedness and perverseness there might be in bringing home to the King and Queen the reports of so

many? A public notary, therefore, is sent, with four witnesses, to take the judgment of each one, from captain to ship-boy, under oath. At this distance of four centuries, and in this light of the end of the nineteenth century, the procedure is simply ridiculously absurd, appearing, as one has said, like attempting "to establish a geographical fact by a certificate under oath." Possibly if we had stood on the deck of one of the ships of the little fleet, conscious of the touch and influence of all the circumstances, we might at least modify our judgment.

But if the act of administering the oath is of doubtful wisdom, the penalties annexed to any opposite opinion expressed afterwards is still more objectionable. It was formally announced by the notary that if any one dared to falsify this expression of conviction, if an officer he should pay a penalty of ten thousand maravedis, and if a private he should receive a hundred lashes and have his tongue cut. This word "*cut*" has generally been rendered "*cut out*," which is straining the meaning. If we fall back upon the customary treatment of liars in Spain—and it was lying and not changing of opinion that was to be punished—we shall find that it was to slit the end of the tongue. This, then, was what Columbus meant by having the tongue "*cut*." And, considering that this event belonged to the age of Torquemada and the Inquisition, the penalty was by no means severe.

The sorrowful faces of the crews became more cheerful on June 13th, as the ships stood to the southeast for Hispaniola. They were passing through a labyrinth of keys, which were almost impenetrable to a sailing

craft. Very soon a large and majestic island, now known as the Isle of Pines, loomed up in the midst of countless islets. Anchoring here for wood and water, they soon bore to the east, along the south side of the island, hoping to find an open passage south of the innumerable islands they had encountered sailing westward, and also intending to explore the south shore of Jamaica *en route*.

But his crews seem to have been greatly dismayed at this indirection; he therefore sailed through the islands back to Cuba over the white sea noticed before. The way was exceedingly toilsome, and the crews were in the most unhappy mood. Nor did the loss of ten days in testing a new passage, and the slim allowance of a pound of mouldy bread and a few swallows of wine per day to a man, tend to the increase of cheerfulness. On June 30th, as they were toiling through the most perplexing channels, the Admiral's ship struck bottom with such violence as to alarm all. The anchor was sent out astern to free her, but they finally had to drag her across the shoal with great effort.

Now they are again sailing along the clear coast of Cuba, in sight of the delightful province of Ornafoy. Like Humboldt, hundreds of years later, they are delighted with the fragrant odors wafted out on the sea.

May not this hungry, tired crew now have a little rest and refreshment? With what joy they cast anchor, July 7th, in the mouth of a beautiful river. While they are taking in wood and water, the Admiral is making the acquaintance of the cacique, who rules over a large tract of this charming country. The exhausted seamen are delighted with the sweet repose

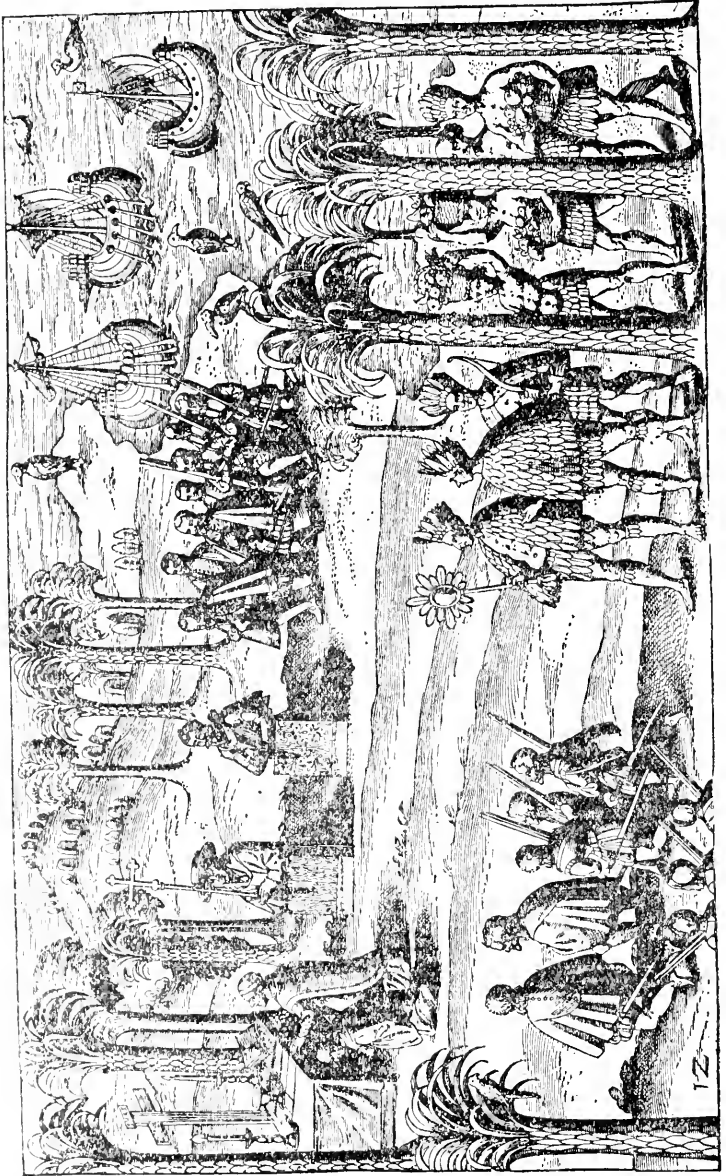
of *terra firma*. No less grateful is the abundant repast furnished by the natives—cassava-bread, utias, birds of every kind, including large, fat pigeons, and such aromatic, luscious fruits!

Nor are the services and ceremonies of religion neglected. A stately cross is erected in a charming grove, and on a bright Sunday morning the impressive ceremonies of high mass are celebrated. The cacique and his venerable counsellor of four-score years have each taken the Admiral by the hand and led him to the grove for worship, the latter having presented to him a string of mystic beads and a calabash of the finest fruit. The natives stand around in groups witnessing the solemnities with the utmost awe.

When all was over, the venerable Indian counsellor approached Columbus and made an address which, for its profound wisdom and sacred import, is worthy to be recorded to the end of time.

This discourse as given by Bernaldez, who, no doubt, received it from the lips of Columbus as a guest at his own fireside, is as follows: “He had known how the Admiral was going about exploring all the islands in these parts and the continent,¹ and that his being on the continent was known to them. He told the Admiral that he must not be vainglorious because all the people were afraid of him, for that he was mortal, like men; and he began by words and by signs to explain how men were born naked, and how they had an immortal soul, and that when any member was diseased it was the soul that felt the pain; that at the time of death, and their separation from the body,

¹ Referring, no doubt, to Cuba.



THE CELEBRATION OF HIGH MASS.

these souls felt very great pain, and that they went to the King of the heavens, or into the abyss of the earth, according to the good or evil they had done and wrought in the world.”

Peter Martyr, who, no doubt, reports the results of his conversations with the Admiral, gives the words of the aged Indian counsellor as follows: “I have been advised, most mighty prince, that you have of late with great power subdued many lands and regions heretofore unknown to you, and have brought great fear on all the people and inhabitants thereof, which good fortune you will bear with less insolency if you remember that the souls of men have two journeys after they are departed from this body: the one, foul and dark, prepared for such as are injurious and cruel to mankind; the other, pleasant and delightful, ordained for those who, in their lifetime, loved peace and quietness. If, therefore, you acknowledge yourself to be mortal, and consider that every man shall receive just rewards or punishments for such things as he hath done in this life, you will wrongfully hurt no man.”

The Admiral was deeply impressed by this address as translated by the Lucayan, and replied to the venerable man, telling how pleased he was to learn his views as to a future state, not having ascertained anything of the kind from the natives before; that he had been sent to teach them religion, to subdue their enemies, the cannibals, and to protect them from all harm. Therefore, the harmless and peaceable might look to him as their friend and protector. The old man, surprised to find that the Admiral was still sub-

ject to a higher ruler, was still more astonished to learn from the Lucayan the glory of Spain and its rulers. Surely that country must be heaven. Would not the Admiral take him along with him on his return? But the entreaties of his wife and family were such that the aged man was obliged to give up the project.

July 16th, Columbus took an affecting farewell of the chief and his venerable adviser, and, taking a young native as interpreter, found sea-room outside the Queen's Gardens on his way to Hispaniola. But he was soon overtaken by a gale, which almost upset the crazy vessels, and so strained his caravel as to let the water in at every seam and defy the efforts of the weary crew at bailing. Anchoring in the shelter of Cape Cruz on the 18th, the Spaniards enjoyed the renewed hospitality of the natives for three days. As the wind was still unfavorable, July 22d the ships stood across to Jamaica in order to circumnavigate that beautiful island. But the coasting of its south shore to the east was the toilsome work of nearly a month. So untoward was the weather that the ships were obliged to anchor under lee of the land each night, the head-winds and pelting showers often compelling them to enter harbor at night where they had started out in the morning. Fortunately the natives were cordial, and brought them abundant provisions. If the leaky crafts and exhausted crews urged Columbus homeward, the magnificence of the island, with its excellent harbors, strongly attracted him to remain and explore the charms of the interior. In one large bay, including seven islands and surrounded with

native villages, the cacique entertained him most nobly.

“The next day the Admiral left the place, and after he had already got under sail with a light wind, the cacique, with three canoes, came towards the ships in such state that I must not omit to describe his equipage. One of the canoes was very large, like a large *fusta*,¹ and much painted; in this canoe was the cacique himself, with his wife and two daughters, one of whom was about eighteen years old, very beautiful, entirely naked, according to the custom of the country, and very modest; the other was younger. There were likewise two boys, his sons, and five of his brothers, and other kinsmen. Indeed, all the others must have been his kinsmen and subjects. He also brought with him in his canoe a man who acted as standard-bearer. This man alone stood in the bow of the canoe, wearing a loose coat of red feathers, resembling in shape those of our kings-at-arms, and on his head a large plume, which looked very well; and in his hand he bore a white banner, without any device. Two or three men came with their faces painted, all in the same way, and each of these wore on his head a large plume, in shape like a helmet, and over the face a round tablet as large as a plate, painted likewise, and all of them in the same style, for neither in these tablets nor in the plumes was there any difference; these carried in their hands a kind of musical instrument, upon which they played. There were two others, who were also painted, but in a different fashion; these bore two wooden trumpets,

¹ Or yacht.

highly wrought with figures of birds and other devices, the wood being black and very fine; each of them wore a very handsome hat of green feathers, very closely put together, and of very ingenious workmanship. Six others wore hats of white feathers, and came in a body as the cacique's guard.

“The cacique wore suspended from his neck a trinket made of copper, which is brought from a neighboring island called Guani, and is very fine, resembling gold of eight carats; in shape it was like a *fleur-de-lis*, and as large as a plate. He wore also on his neck a string of large marble beads, which these people value very highly; and on his head a large open crown of very small green and red stones, disposed in order and intermixed with some larger, white ones, so as to look very well. He had suspended over his forehead a large jewel, and from his ears hung two large plates of gold, with rings of very small green beads, and although naked he wore a girdle of the same workmanship as the crown, all the rest of his body being uncovered. His wife was decked in a similar manner and naked, except so much of her person as was covered by a bit of cotton not larger than an orange leaf. She wore upon her arms, just below the shoulders, a roll of cotton like those on the sleeves of the ancient French doublets, and another similar roll, but larger, she wore on each leg below the knee—like the anklets of the Moorish women. The elder and more beautiful of the daughters was entirely naked, wearing only a girdle of stones of a single color, black and very small, from which hung something in the shape of an ivy-leaf, of green and red stones, embroidered upon cotton cloth.

“The large canoe came between the two others and a little in advance of them, and as soon as it came up with the vessel the cacique came on board and began giving to the masters and each of the men something from his treasures. This was in the morning and the Admiral was at his prayers, knowing nothing of this giving of presents or of the purpose of the coming of this cacique, who had come at once on board the caravel with his followers, and when the Admiral came on deck he had sent back his attendants to the land with the canoes and they were already at a considerable distance. As soon as the Admiral made his appearance the cacique came towards him with a very joyful countenance, addressing him as follows: ‘My friend, I have resolved to leave my country and go with thee to see the King and Queen and the Prince, their son—the two greatest lords in the world, whose power is so great that they have subdued so many countries hereabouts by means of thee, who art their subject and goest on thy conquests by their command. This we have learned from those Indians whom thou carriest with thee, and also how everywhere the people are wondrously afraid of thee—even the Caribs, an innumerable and very brave race, whose canoes and dwellings thou hast destroyed, and hast captured their wives and children, and slain those of them who did not escape by flight. I know that in all the islands of this region there is an infinite number of people and a vast country, and they all stand in fear and great dread of thee, and thou canst do them much harm and injury if they do not submit to the great King of Castile, thy lord, since thou knowest the people of these islands and their weakness, and art acquainted

with the country. And before thou shalt take from me my lands and dominions I wish to go with thee in thy vessels, with my family, to see the mighty King and Queen, thy sovereigns, and the land in which they dwell, the richest the most abundant in the world, and the wonders of Castile, which are many, as thy Indian has told me.'"¹

The situation was decidedly embarrassing. His leaky ships and mouldy bread would afford but poor accommodations for these royal personages. He therefore relieved himself of the dangerous draught on his scant larder and the overcrowding of his small cabins by promising to comply with the cacique's wishes at a more opportune season, when he might be going directly to Spain.

On the 20th of July the Admiral was coasting the south side of the western peninsula of Hispaniola. He did not recognize the island, however, till a cacique, pushing out to the caravels on the 23d, accosted him by his title and mixed a little Castilian in his Indian sentences. But it was still no small matter to get around the island. The weather was so severe as to separate the ships, and it was near the end of August when the Admiral anchored his ship at the tall rock "Alto Velo," so named because, in the distance, it resembled a ship under sail. This island was only half way along the south shore. Here, while the sailors kept lookout for the other two vessels, they found the pigeons and other birds so tame that they could knock them over with sticks. They also killed what they called sea-wolves—probably a kind of seal—while these creatures were

¹ Bernaldez.

sleeping on the sand. Being joined finally by the other two caravels, they proceeded, passing beautiful rivers and bays, where the Indian villages could be seen in various directions.

Presently some of the natives came out in canoes to greet them. They had seen some of the Spaniards recently and reported favorably concerning the colony. Being thus encouraged, he landed nine men, who were to cross the island and announce his approach to Isabella.


A little further east the weather became so threatening that the Admiral took shelter in a channel behind a key or islet. An eclipse of the moon enabled him to take his longitude. During eight tempestuous days he waited here, intensely anxious as to the fate of the other vessels, tossed by the tempest he knew not whither. In due time, however, they rejoined him, and by the 24th of September they had reached the eastern end of Hispaniola. Between Hayti and Porto Rico is the island of Mona. Here they anchored.

Even now, with his damaged ships and failing stores of provisions, the Admiral "could not get the consent of his mind" to put into Isabella without further exploration of the Carib islands, lying just away to the southeast. But from this undertaking the crews were suddenly relieved. Strong as our veteran seaman was, blood and nerve could not sustain the stupendous efforts of his mind. Trying enough were the hunger, the toil, and the buffeting of storms endured by the ship-boy. All of these Columbus shared; but what were they compared with that watchfulness which kept guard while others slept?—the sleepless eye that studied the

stars by night, and scanned the horizon night and day for new islands and continents?—the consciousness that all Spain and the world were gazing upon him? Fernando Columbus says the Admiral had scarcely slept three hours in eight days. Columbus himself says he was thirty-three days without natural rest. In all, this anxious, nervous voyage had lasted five months. And, after all, what was it but an immense disappointment? Surely it was nothing more than a grand uncertainty. What wonder, then, that the reaction was too great for the natural forces to sustain? A lethargy like a deep sleep came over him. The hand was helpless; the open, fixed eyes were sightless; the perceptive faculties were all dormant; memory was broken off. The little fleet sailed into Isabella bearing their commander-in-chief—scarcely more than a dead man! A severe sickness of some five months—the same length of time as the voyage—now followed.

CHAPTER XIII.

EVENTS ON REACHING ISABELLA.

ONE joy, at least, awaited the Admiral. His brother Bartholomew was at his bedside. The chase of this affectionate brother, for some ten years, in the interests of Christopher—now Admiral—is really affecting. Having shared the voyage of Bartholomew Diaz along the south coast of Africa in 1486, in which voyage the Cape of Good Hope was discovered,¹ he afterwards went to England to enlist Henry VII. in favor of his brother's scheme. Gobbled up by pirates and reduced to such extreme poverty that he was obliged to spend considerable time in making maps, charts, etc., ere he could appear before that potentate, he was so belated in reaching France after his success in England² that Paris was already aflame with the news of his brother's triumphant return from his first voyage. Bartholomew at once gained notoriety at the French court, and Charles VIII. gave him one hundred crowns to help him back to Spain. Here he arrived just after the Admiral had set out on his second voyage. Going to the Spanish court with his young nephews, who were to be pages to the royal household, he was made commander in a

¹ This is ascertained from a note, in his handwriting, on the margin of his brother's famous copy of Cardinal Iliaco's *Imago Mundi*.

² The history of this trip to England is somewhat obscure, but Henry VII. seems to have given heed to Bartholomew's interesting map and to have favored Christopher's project.

fleet about to sail to the Indies. Here again he arrived too late. The Admiral's little squadron had just left for the south side of Cuba. At last the brothers, so alike in nature and in the aims and purposes of life, had met. Tall and stately like his brother, and of a very similar grade of culture, Bartholomew was less imaginative, less speculative, more stern and practical—less of a genius, more of a man of affairs. We shall know him by his career hereafter. Happy hours must these two heroic natures have found in each other during the long days of convalescence of the Admiral. No insignificant chit-chat theirs, but talk about something—something of weight to the world. The Admiral would want to know all about that tour to the English court, also about that favorable reception in Paris. And how were matters in Spain? The boys were at the court and were well, and the Admiral was still held in high esteem there; and that "bull of extension" which the Pope issued just as Columbus had departed on his second voyage!—how completely it would protect Spain against Portugal in the full possession of all the pagan countries of the Indies which the former might discover.

But the outlook at Isabella was threatening. The great shock of disappointment to the large company of adventurers who had come out in the second voyage was still keenly felt. The arduous labor, constant privation, and slow profits of a pioneer life did not suit their notions of making a fortune. Then *this foreigner*, who demanded that "if any man did not work neither should he eat," and who required that hidalgo, priest, and common laborer should all toil alike in

ploughing the field, building the town, and in grinding at the mill, was, to say the least, very distasteful to them.

But if the colony was in an unhappy mood, the natives were in a still more dangerous attitude. The instructions given to Margarite by the Admiral as he was about to sail for Cuba contained dangerous elements, and that leader had precipitated the evil consequences by neglecting the better clauses, which might at least in part have served as a corrective. If he were not to annoy the natives by impositions, he must, on the other hand, make them fear the power of the white man; and to turn out some four hundred hungry Spaniards to be fed by the slim provisions of the natives was presuming a good deal on their hospitality, especially when we remember Las Casas' statement, that "one man would consume in a day that which would have sufficed three Indian families of ten persons each for the space of a whole month." But always and everywhere the heinous offence of the Spaniards against the natives was that against the chastity of their wives and daughters.

Margarite had given little or no attention to law and order or the accomplishing of any good purpose in the absence of Columbus. He led out his four hundred into the beauties and luxuries of the *Vega Real* to revel at pleasure. Their excesses, it would seem, were simply a repetition of the affairs of *La Navidad* on a large scale.

When Diego Columbus, seeing the inevitable consequences of such evil courses, wrote to Margarite, warning him and reminding him of his charge to explore the

country and the gold regions, this haughty leader at once headed a faction of the Admiral's most bitter enemies. And in this wicked enterprise he found an able colleague in Father Buil, a Benedictine friar, who was proving false alike to his duties as a member of the ruling council at Isabella and as chief apostle to the heathen natives.

Under the mild rule of Diego, a better ecclesiastic than ruler of a colony, it would seem, these malcontents seized two of the ships in the harbor, and, along with their accomplices, sailed for Spain. If there was great relief in being rid of these arch-rebels, there was no telling what the evil influence of this Spanish knight and high ecclesiastic might be with the sovereigns and nobility at home. Such anticipations were not very helpful to the convalescent Admiral.

But the evil did not depart with the leaders. The adherents of Margarite became a sort of banditti, and breaking up into small squads infested the country in the most lawless manner. The natural indignation of the human heart arose among the natives. Acts of vengeance, few at first, soon became more common, and before long the Indians were planning a combination against their intruders.

The brave and sagacious Caonabo was planning to surprise Fort St. Thomas in the mountains with about ten thousand warriors armed with clubs, bows and arrows, and lances pointed and hardened in the fire. But Ojeda, as big in spirit as he was little in body, getting clue to his intentions, made solemn vows to the Virgin, in the presence of that picture of "Our Lady" which he kept on the wall of his chamber, and

put his fifty men under arms, making them bristle along the ramparts. Cross-bows and arquebuses told heavily on naked bodies, and when this spirited leader sallied forth here and there with his men in armor Caonabo's braves fell almost in rank and file.

If there was no hope in weapons of war, there might be hope in famine. Caonabo stationed his forces on every pass, in order to cut off every source of supply. This told heavily on the fortress, especially after being kept up for thirty days. But Ojeda made frequent and effective sallies round about, always seeming to move too quickly to be struck by any Indian lance or arrow. By and by the Indians became wearied of this protracted and apparently useless effort and gradually disappeared in the forests.

When Caonabo left St. Thomas, filled with admiration for the tact and dash of Ojeda, it was only to mature wider and deeper plans for the destruction of the Spaniards. By a careful reconnoitre he ascertained the weakness of the colony at Isabella. He then undertook to unite all the native forces of the island against it. This was no very difficult task. The conduct of the white men had so broken down the original notion of the Indians as to their angelic or divine nature, and had so embittered their feelings, that there was a general readiness for the uprising.

It was no small matter for Guacanagari to break away from his neighboring chiefs and ally himself to the detested strangers, but the confidence of the Admiral was rewarded by a friendly call from this interesting savage, during which the former was informed of the combination against him and of the cost of the

latter's loyalty—of his wives, one having been killed by Behechio, and another captured by Caonabo. Thus Guacanagari was suffering the enmity of his old native colleagues on account of his friendship for the white men. The loyalty of this noble-hearted cacique, whose large territory was in the immediate vicinity of the settlement, was of incalculable importance.

Columbus was almost without force or even available leadership in the midst of this threatening combination of the many thousands of enraged natives. He was on his sick-bed, there was no one among the Spaniards capable of leading the attack, and they were jealous of Bartholomew. First a small force was sent to the relief of Fort Magdalena, which was in danger of falling a prey to Guatiguana, the angry cacique of the Grand River region. He had recently massacred a number of Spaniards, probably for excesses committed in his dominions. The expedition against him was successful, with the usual Spanish excesses, as it would appear, the cacique himself making good his escape.

As this was a tributary cacique to Guarionex, who was known to be amenable to kindly influences, Columbus sent for him in order to have a friendly interview. The Admiral deprecated the licentiousness and excesses of the Spaniards as contrary to his wishes and intentions, and by means of his remarkable persuasive powers he brought this gentle-hearted savage into friendly relations, which he sealed by effecting the marriage of the chief's daughter and his Lucayan intrepeter, called Diego Colon. This brought him into peaceful relations with the whole Vega Real,

which he made still more secure by building the Fort La Conception.

But if Guarionex had been brought into friendly relations, Caonabo, the powerful cacique of the gold regions, could not be conciliated. Much has been said as to the dishonorable instructions given by Columbus for the capture of this redoubtable chief. But here was a pressing necessity, and if war even in our day is "cruel" and "cannot be refined," much more was it so in that unscrupulous age. Ojeda, with his usual "cunning and dash," is the hero of this striking episode. He would go as a peaceful ambassador to that chieftain, thus appealing to his high, chivalrous feelings. With ten trusty comrades, he would partake of his hospitality and propose a journey to Isabella, where the savage chieftain was to enter into peaceful relations with the Admiral and receive as a gift the chapel bell—a great mystery to the natives, since it could call the people together. It was made of a *talking metal*, they said, and all brazen, glittering objects were associated with this "talking metal." How Caonabo, when lurking about the woods around Isabella, had longed to see this wonderful object, no doubt come down from heaven. Surely he would do almost anything to have it now as his own. Thus far all was well; but what was Ojeda's surprise, on starting out, to see a powerful band of warriors ready to march in protection of their chief! "Why take such an army when going on a friendly visit?" he asked. "It would not do for a prince like himself to go slimly attended," he replied. Here was a perplexity. The affairs of Isabella were in too weak a condition to have a savage army precipitated upon it.

The authority for the shrewd stratagem now resorted to is none other than the venerable Las Casas, who arrived at Isabella some six years after the occurrence and found a vivid recollection of it among the citizens.

As the Indians and the Spaniards were journeying along together they came to a river. Here, as they halted, Ojeda displayed a set of steel manacles, so highly polished as to resemble burnished silver. These ornaments, Ojeda said, came from heaven, and were worn by his monarchs at home, at great festivals. If Caonabo would first take a bath, he would present them to him; and if he would put them on he might ride back on his own horse, to the great astonishment of his subjects. Sharp as Caonabo was, he walked straight into this trap. Having enjoyed his swim, he mounted the horse behind Ojeda, and suffered the shining ornaments to be fastened upon him. While the chieftain was delighting himself over his lofty position and royal present, Ojeda started, and his comrades followed. They whirl into a circle, which is made larger at each round, the frightened natives flying pell-mell into the woods in every direction. The riders found it easy to escape through the scattered body-guard. When far enough away to be concealed they halted, closed about their captive, drew their swords, and threatened death if he tried to escape. Having bound him firmly to Ojeda with cords, they put spurs to their horses for Isabella. Fifty leagues or more, past large Indian towns, lay between them and home. The vast community of native allies must not be excited, so they move with utmost caution and pass the towns in full gallop. They are hungry and

fatigued, yet they must keep on—fording rivers, crossing long reaches of plain clothed in gigantic grasses, tearing their way through tangled thickets and forests, and clambering over rocky hills and mountains.

But they enter Isabella in triumph, to the great delight of Columbus and the colony. The Admiral will keep him bound in his own house till he can send him as a prisoner to Spain, passers-by gazing at him from the street. Truly a lesson in human life is this Carib of the mountains. He will not humble himself in the presence of the Admiral, nor take the least notice of him. He boasts of his massacre of La Navidad, and acknowledges his intent of treating Isabella in like manner. Why does he rise to his feet and pay the profoundest respect to Ojeda when he enters the room, but never deign to notice the Admiral? The latter did not dare to attack him in his mountain fastness, but the former was heroic enough to make him a captive. His face is hard as the mountain rocks. True to the nature of the savage, he will show no sign of grief or despair, but will be brave and unyielding to the end.

While Columbus was still on his sick-bed, Bartholomew acting as deputy, under the title of adelantado, Antonio Torres arrived from Spain with four ships, bringing a new physician, medicines, *artificers and gardeners*. Was there not hope now that the sick might be cured and that the rich resources of the soil might be developed?

Then that letter from the sovereigns, dated August 16th—how comforting it must have been! Not only had the Pope's line of demarcation been settled once

and for all between Spain and Portugal—370 leagues west of the Cape de Verde Islands, but they wished him to come himself or to send some one to them capable of running this boundary line, which they hoped might pass through some island, where a monument could be raised. And did they not owe all this immense addition to their dominions to the genius and perseverance of the Admiral? Equally opportune was the letter of the sovereigns to the colonists commanding strict obedience to the authority and to all the wishes of the Viceroy, under penalty of ten thousand maravedis for each offence. As the Admiral could not go, Diego, his brother, was chosen to return, armed with maps, charts, etc., to help in respect to the Pope's line. 'Torres' ships must go back as soon as possible, bearing something which might be regarded as an adequate return for the liberal supplies brought out. But what should it be? There was but little gold; a variety of new fruits and spices, indeed, and samples of the more common metals; but these, all put together, were but a sorry cargo for such a fleet to take back to the expectant nation, all eyes being turned to the fabulous resources—gold, pearls, gems, spices, silks—of the Indies.

In this terrible emergency, why not imitate Portugal, making herself wealthy in the now well-established African slave-trade; or Spain herself, who enriched her coffers from the sale of the vanquished Moors, taking not only men under arms, but thousands of peaceful peasants and helpless women and children? True, this very fleet had just brought the decline of the sovereigns to a proposed slavery of the Caribs, in his

famous "Memorial," the humane heart of Isabella asking if the evangelization of these heathen cannibals could not be accomplished "in some other way;" but had not the casuistry of the church decided in favor of the enslavement of the heathen by Christian nations, that thus their benighted souls might come under the illuminating influences of Christianity? Anyhow, necessity knows no law, so here files the long train of poor Indian prisoners of war into the ships—five hundred of them going to Spain to be sold in exchange for cattle, farm implements, seeds, etc.! If the scene could have been photographed, would we want the picture? Alas for the tender mercies of a Christian civilization four hundred years ago!

But let us not lay all the responsibility of this sad scene upon Christopher Columbus. He was simply in line with the public—or we may say Christian—sentiment of his time. Had his conceptions of human freedom been as far in advance of his age as were his views in cosmography, he might have illustrated in his personal history the noble and humane principles of Las Casas; but we can scarcely look for an advanced example of all the great virtues in one man.

And now one scene of misery crowds upon the heels of another. The fleet laden with poor unfortunates bound for the slave-markets of Spain was barely out at sea, when the suffering natives had massed themselves in the *Vega Real*—Las Casas thinks a hundred thousand of them—to wage war against their foreign oppressors. And what had Columbus to bring out against this dusky host, bristling with bows and arrows, war-clubs, and rude lances, pointed and hardened in

the fire? Two hundred foot and twenty horse! But they were trained warriors, well armed, cased in steel, and shielded by bucklers. The Admiral, barely up from a sick-bed, took the lead, aided by Bartholomew and Ojeda, April 25, 1495. Guacanagari followed along with his naked warriors, but they were little more than spectators in this swift destruction.

They climbed up the Gentleman's Pass, and descended into the magnificent Vega Real—alas! no longer the earthly paradise of ease, peace, and plenty, but the rendezvous of many thousands of angry savages. These were led by Manicaotex, brother of the brave Caonabo. When, according to their custom, the Indian spies, unskilled in the science of numbers, returned with a mere handful of corn, each grain representing a man in the enemy's army, *the caciques laughed at the insignificance of their enemies as compared with their own immense numbers.* But the little Spanish army of foot, divided into detachments, rushed upon them in front, flank, and rear at the same instant, with the deafening noise of drums, trumpets, and fire-arms. Steel lances, swords, cross-bows, and arquebuses were too much for the naked Indians. They pressed together in utmost confusion. At the same moment, Ojeda dashed among them with his twenty war-horses, striking right and left with sabre and lance. While the horses were trampling down the bleeding victims the fierce blood-hounds rushed upon them, dragging them down into the dust by the throat and "tearing out their bowels." The terrific shrieks and yells of the poor mortals were indescribable. From rocks and precipices they begged for quar-

ter most piteously. Vast numbers were killed, still more were made prisoners, and the immense Indian army was scattered and broken up as if alike by thunder and lightning from heaven and by fiends let loose upon them from the infernal pit.

Who was responsible for this horrid slaughter? Surely not the simple-hearted, generous natives, for they were the most amiable of all beings till their hospitalities and homes were outraged. And shall any one say that this tempest of savage indignation would ever have arisen if the plans and instructions of Columbus had been carried out from the beginning? The uncontrollable excesses of the Spaniards must ever be regarded as the cause of all these dire calamities with the natives.

The victory in the *Vega* was now to be followed up by crushing out every symptom of rebellion in more remote parts. Columbus and his warriors therefore traversed the island, Ojeda and his horsemen moving almost on the wings of the wind to any point which might threaten insurrection. One after another, the caciques submitted to the inevitable authority. Guarionex, chief of the *Vega*, naturally gentle and submissive, and Maucacotex, Caonabo's valiant brother, both made peace, and others followed—all except Behechio, chief of the western part of the island; he had not yet come into personal contact with the Spaniards, and his dominions afforded the safest retreat to his sister, the beautiful Anacaona, wife of the captive cacique Caonabo.

We now come to one of the worst measures of the Admiral's administration in these islands. We must,

however, give due weight to certain motive powers over which he had no immediate control. Unwittingly he had brought about a great national disappointment. He had reported the discovery of the Indies, the country of fabulous wealth—the desideratum of the nations. But where was the gold, the pearls, the silks? The hundreds of eager fortune-seekers in the Indies had for the most part either sickened and died in despair or had gone back to Spain to report their disappointment in a manner most damaging to his great enterprise. The sovereigns, too, expected gold—must have gold! The recovery of the Holy Sepulchre would require gold. Somehow gold must be gotten, or the most disastrous failure would be insured. Columbus had no doubt but there was plenty of the precious metal in the mountains and streams of the island, but the ordinary methods—owing, no doubt, to the inefficiency of the Spaniards—had failed to procure it in encouraging quantities. But was there not now an opportunity—providential, perhaps—of commanding an immense working force—men, women, and children—who knew every nook and stream of the mountains, and who had some slight experience, at least, in searching and washing out the gold? Then it would be perfectly proper, according to all received ideas of church and state, to command and compel these heathen captives. How rapidly, how magic-like, this great army of native workers might accumulate the grains and nuggets of the precious metal! Here, indeed, was a golden dream—one well in keeping with the times.

So every native over fourteen years of age was required to deliver a Flemish hawk's bell of gold every

three months—a tax equal, perhaps, to some \$15 in our time. The caciques were to pay more—Guarionex a half-calabash of gold-dust.

If the Vega Real and other similar rich tracts of the island afforded little or no gold, did not cotton—*tree-wool*, as the German calls it—grow wild on the trees and shrubs everywhere? An *arroba*—twenty-five pounds—of this important product might be taken as an equivalent for the hawk's bell of gold-dust. Thus the tax—certainly a heavy one for these poor natives, all unused to labor and hardship—was arranged. Guarionex was much troubled at the exaction, lest his people should not be able to comply; and proposed to grow a belt of grain from ocean to ocean across the island—enough to provision all Castile for ten years, Las Casas thought.

But this generous offer was rejected, for nothing but gold would meet the necessities of the case. If the full measure of the hawk's bell¹ was too much, it might be lessened one-half.

About this time the sovereigns wrote to Columbus: "It appears to us that there should be given to Indians with whom it is concerted that they are to pay the tribute imposed, a piece or mark of brass coin or lead, which they must wear on the nape; and the figure or mark of this said coin must be changed every time they pay, in order that it may be known who has not paid; and that whenever and wherever persons are found in the island who have not changed the said mark on the

¹ "It is a curious circumstance," says Irving, "and might furnish some practical conceits, that the miseries of the poor natives should thus be measured out, as it were, by the very baubles which first fascinated them."

nape they are to be seized and subjected to some slight punishment." A copper coin was selected as the tribute-sign, to be worn on the neck, the die being changed at each payment. If any one had not the tri-monthly payment thus certified, he was to be arrested and punished. Thus we see that Ferdinand and Isabella were in full sympathy with this enactment of Columbus.

In order that the payment of these tributes might be duly enforced, the fortresses were all put in order and new ones built—all so located as to keep an effective surveillance over the island.

"In this way," says Irving, "was the yoke of servitude fixed upon the island, and its thralldom effectually insured. Deep despair now fell upon the natives when they found a perpetual task inflicted upon them, enforced at stated and frequently recurring periods. Weak and indolent by nature, unused to labor of any kind, and brought up in the untasked idleness of their soft climate and their fruitful groves, death itself seemed preferable to a life of toil and anxiety." Nor was there anything better to be seen in the future. A power which they could not comprehend overshadowed them. And these superhuman white men, clad in steel, thrusting spears and swords into their flesh, arraying the very thunder and lightning against them, robbing them of their lands and invading their household happiness, had come to stay. Else why those great houses of most solid structure in wood and stone, compared with which their mere wigwams were frail as birds' nests? Their peculiar life of ease and peaceful pleasure—one which poets and philosophers might envy—with wants the fewest and resources of

nature the greatest, was now forever passed away. Those elysian fields and groves, where they had loitered and lounged in the shade by day and sung and danced to the sylvan drum by night, were now to be scenes of toil and moil and hopeless servitude. "Hewers of wood," "drawers of water," tillers of the soil, miners in the mountain and stream, they must bend to the severest labor throughout the day, and lie down in weariness and despair at night. Their song and dance, once the very expression of a light and a joyous heart, now degenerated into the mere voice and movement of melancholy. They even recalled prophecies in which their ancestors had foretold the advent of strangers, clothed and bearing swords which could divide one asunder at a blow, who should conquer and enslave their posterity.

But these foreigners, apparently more than human—whether demons or angels, it was hard to tell—these beings must eat and drink, and seemed very dependent on *them* for these daily necessities. Herein might lie the secret of their power—they would starve these white men out. They, the natives, could live on the roots and herbs and scattered fruits of the mountains, and could find shelter in the caves among the rocks. So away they went, father, mother, and child, to try the desperate experiment. But there was more in the undertaking than they, in their simplicity of heart, had taken into the account. The white men suffered, indeed, for want of the immediate service and supplies of the Indians, but they had all Spain back of them, and the distance across the ocean was every day becoming shorter and less formidable.

The Indians, especially the aged, the infirm, the mother with her infant on her back, and the still more helpless little one, found scanty and insufficient fare when so far away from the fertile valleys, and the chill and dampness of the mountain air was too severe for most of them in their naked exposure to the elements.

But even in this miserable resort they could not escape their oppressors. They were hunted like game in their mountain fastnesses, and those escaping sickness and death were brought back by force to toil in the fields and in the mines. The robustness and the irrepressible mirthfulness of the African may enable him to bear up under the great wrongs of enslavement, but the frail, moody, melancholy Indian, dependent upon the ease and leisure of savage life, upon that sweetness of nature which is taken into the soul by quiet observation and reflection, sickens and dies under its trials and hardships. The natives of the islands became a broken-hearted people, and vanished, as we shall see, like snow under the sunny days of spring.

But the saddest item in this dark picture of the suffering natives is the final fate of that kind-hearted cacique, Guacanagari. His people, along with the rest, found the tax very grievous; and, as he had always been the special friend and ally of the white man, he was marked down by his whole race as an aid to their calamities. Nor does it seem that any discrimination was ever made in favor of him or his people by the Spaniards. All bore alike the crushing weight of tax and toil and final slavery. How could

one of his generous and sensitive nature endure the pains and cries of his people, the contempt and hatred of the multitudes of hopelessly afflicted natives, and the vile ingratitude of these strangers, whose power to crush and destroy seemed unlimited? He, too, fled to the mountains, and there died, broken hearted, in some lonely haunt.

Irving excuses Columbus in respect to this melancholy event on account of his own sufferings and his long detention in Europe at the time. This excuse is worthy of consideration, and, in view of the cruel customs of the times, we are inclined to make the most of it; and yet there is no denying or obscuring the fact that the "Admiral of the Ocean Seas" did not anticipate the humane conceptions of the nineteenth century. His policy sacrificed the natives of Hispaniola to that insatiable greed for gain in the Spanish nation which, at this hour, was such an imminent peril to him and his enterprise.

Where is the heart that will not ache and bleed at the review of such scenes of human suffering? On whom does this great wrong rest? Not on any one individual alone; certainly not on Columbus particularly, though he must forever bear his share of guilt and sin against the most sacred rights of humanity. To determine the rights of the savage when civilized man has once set foot on his soil has never been an easy question, and is by no means solved at the present time. And with our sense of obligation to human freedom and the relief of human suffering it is not easy to judge the moral sense, conscience, and degree of guilt in these far different

sentiments and circumstances of four hundred years ago. In an age when the highest religious consciousness of an enlightened Christian nation could justify the horrors of the Inquisition we must not be too severe on a sailor and self-made man, growing up amidst the more or less piratical enterprises then common to the high seas. Between the sentiments and convictions of this end of the nineteenth century and those of the latter part of the fifteenth there is an incalculable distance. We have at least had the immense moral illuminations of the Reformation of the sixteenth century since then. After all, are not the strong humanitarian sentiments so characteristic of our own time of comparative recent origin?

Before accompanying Columbus on his third voyage it will be necessary to notice an enterprise in another part of the world, fraught with the greatest consequences to this continent. We have already had occasion to notice that Bartholomew Columbus had been sent to make overtures to Henry VII. of England in behalf of his brother Christopher's grand scheme in anticipation. Whatever the King may have thought of this man of the "red earth," with his map so strangely garnished with verses—whether he thought him to be building "castles in the air," or to indicate some great enterprise well worthy of attention—there was soon to arise among his people a citizen of foreign birth and accent who should open the way to this new world about to be discovered on the other side of the globe for the establishment of the English language, civilization, enterprise, and formulas of the Christian religion. Spain may unfurl her banner and plant the

cross on the islands and outlying shores of the new hemisphere, but the little island of the Tudor kings will give birth to the nation and the people about to occupy the heart of a great continent and develop a life of such unprecedented freedom and prosperity as shall become the desideratum of all mankind.

For many years Bristol, noted for its commercial enterprise, had been the point of departure for ships to the Iceland fisheries, thus carrying on an extensive trade with the Norsemen, and for nearly a score of years she had been sending out expeditions in search of the fancied island, Brazil, and that of the Seven Cities, supposed to be somewhere to the west of Ireland. In Bristol, as in Spain and Portugal, Genoa was represented. John Cabot, though having spent in Venice the fifteen years necessary to gain citizenship,¹ claimed her as his birthplace; and when the news arrived that Christopher Columbus, a fellow-townsmen by birth, had reached the Indies by sailing to the west, this "foreign-born" citizen of Bristol—this merchant-sailor—seeing that the achievement was regarded as "more divine than human," felt in himself "a great flame of desire to attempt something notable."

Many years before, while in Arabia, he had inquired of a caravan laden with spices whence these commodities had come. Having traced them from hand to

¹ John Cabot is called by his contemporaries a *Venetian*, and more especially a *citizen of Venice*, because citizenship, once accorded only to the nobility or privileged class, afterwards, when the plague set a premium on population, extended to one who married a Venetian woman, and then again was restricted to those having resided for fifteen years consecutively in the city of Venice. The Senate, in 1476, admitted Cabot to the ordinary and extra privileges of citizenship by virtue of a residence of fifteen years.

See HARRISSE, Jean et Sebastian Cabot. p. 2.

hand into the far east, his thoughts had been aroused to the desideratum of oriental trade. Whether previously impressed with the sphericity of the earth or not, he was soon capable of contemplating or even making a globe; and he could thus conceive the practicability of a western route to the land of spices. Before January of 1496 he had applied to the King of England for aid to undertake a voyage similar to that of Columbus. Notification to this effect was sent home to the sovereigns by Puebla, the Spanish ambassador, and before they could send back their warning, that such an enterprise would be an infringement on the rights of Spain and Portugal, the English King had issued his patent to Cabot and his three sons, including Sebastian, that they might "sail to the east, west, or north, with five ships carrying the English flag, to seek and discover all the islands, countries, regions, or provinces of pagans in whatever part of the world," provided they would return to the port of Bristol and give the King one-fifth of the profits. Permission to sail south was not granted them, lest they should encounter the enterprises of Spain, or possibly Portugal.

On a May morning, 1497, the one solitary ship, named the *Matthew*, sailed away to the northwest with eighteen men on board. Probably Sebastian accompanied his father. As two letters, well authenticated, indeed, but of comparatively recent finding, tell about all that is certainly known of this voyage, and as the letters are exceedingly quaint and interesting, we will here quote them. The first is from Lorenzo Pasqualigo, a London merchant, to his brothers in Venice, August 23, 1497, and, slightly abridged, reads as follows:

“The Venetian, our countryman, who went with a ship from Bristol, is returned, and says that 700 leagues hence he discovered land in the territory of the Grand Cham. He coasted 300 leagues and landed, saw no human beings, but brought to the King certain snares to catch game, and a needle for making nets ; was three months on the voyage. The King has promised that in the spring our countryman shall have ten ships. The King has also given him money wherewith to amuse himself till then, and he is now in Bristol with his wife, who is also a Venecian, and with his sons. His name is Zuan Cabot, and he is styled the Great Admiral. Vast honor is paid him. The discoverer planted on his new-found land a large cross, with one flag of England and one of St. Mark, by reason of his being a Venetian.” * * * (Venetian Calendars, i, 262.) The same author says that Cabot, the Grand Admiral, was “dressed in silk, and the English ran after him like crazy men.”

The other letter is by Raimondo de Soncino to the Duke of Milan, written from London and found in the state archives of Milan :

“Most Illustrious and Excellent My Lord :

“Perhaps, among your Excellency’s many occupations, it may not displease you to learn how his Majesty here has won a part of Asia without a stroke of the sword. There is in this kingdom a Venetian fellow, Master John Caboto by name, of a fine mind, greatly skilled in navigation, who seeing that those most serene kings, first he of Portugal, and then the one of Spain, have occupied unknown islands, determined to make a like acquisition for his Majesty afore-

said. And having obtained royal grants that he should have the usufruct of all that he should discover, provided that the ownership of the same is reserved to the Crown, with a small ship and eighteen persons he committed himself to fortune; and having set out from Bristol, a western port of this kingdom, and passed the western limits of Hibernia,¹ and then standing to the northward he began to steer eastward,² leaving (after a few days) the North star on his right hand; and, having wandered about considerably, at last he fell in with *terra firma*, where, having planted the royal banner and taken possession on behalf of this King and taken certain tokens, he has returned thence. The said Master John, as being foreign-born and poor, would not be believed if his comrades, who are almost all Englishmen and from Bristol, did not testify that what he says is true. This Master John has the description of the world in a chart, and also in a solid globe which he has made, and he (or the chart and the globe) shows where he landed, and that going towards the east³ he passed considerably beyond the country of the Tanais.⁴ And they say that it was a very good and temperate country, and they think that Brazil-wood and silk grow there; and they affirm that that sea is covered with fishes, which are caught not only with the net, but with baskets, a stone being tied to them in order that the baskets may sink in the water. And this I heard the said Master John relate; and the aforesaid Englishmen, his comrades, say that they will bring so many fishes that this kingdom will

¹ Ireland.

² This must mean westward.

³ Evidently west.

⁴ This is obscure.

no longer have need of Iceland, from which country there comes a very great store of fish, which are called stock-fish. But Master John has set his mind on something greater, for he expects to go farther on towards the east from that place already occupied, constantly hugging the shore until he shall be over against (or "on the other side of") an island by him called Cipango, situated in the equinoctial region, where he thinks all the spices of the world, and also the precious stones, originate; and he says that in former times he was at Mecca, whither spices are brought by caravans from distant countries, and that those who brought them, on being asked where the said spices grow, answered that they do not know, but that other caravans come to their homes with this merchandise from distant countries, and these (caravans) again say that they are brought to them from other remote regions. And he argues thus: that if the Orientals affirmed to the southerners that these things come from a distance from them, and so from hand to hand, presupposing the rotundity of the earth, it must be that the last ones get them at the north towards the west; and he said it in such a way that, having nothing to gain or to lose by it, I too believe it; and, what is more, the King here, who is wise and not lavish, likewise puts some faith in him, for (ever) since his return he has made good provision for him, as the same Master John tells me. And it is said that in the spring his Majesty aforesaid will fit out some ships, and will besides give him all the convicts, and they will go to that country to make a colony, by means of which they hope to establish in London a greater storehouse

of spices than there is in Alexandria, and the chief men of the enterprise are of Bristol, great sailors, who, now that they know where to go, say that it is not a voyage of more than fifteen days, nor do they ever have storms after they get away from Hibernia. I have also talked with a Burgundian, a comrade of Master John's, who confirms everything, and wishes to return thither because the Admiral (for so Master John already entitles himself) has given him an island; and he has given another one to a barber of his from Castiglione, of Genoa, and both of them regard themselves as counts, nor does my Lord the Admiral esteem himself anything less than a prince. I think that with this expedition there will go several poor Italian monks, who have all been promised bishoprics. And, as I have become a friend of the Admiral, if I wished to go thither I should get an archbishopric. But I have thought that the benefices which your Excellency has in store for me are a surer thing; and therefore I beg that if they should fall vacant in my absence, you will cause possession to be given to me, taking measures to do this rather (especially) where it is needed in order that they be not taken from me by others, who because they are present can be more diligent than I, who in this country have been brought to the pass of eating ten or twelve dishes at every meal, and sitting at table three hours at a time twice a day, for the sake of your Excellency, to whom I commend myself.

“Your Excellency's

“Very humble servant,

“RAIMONDUS.

“London, Dec. 18, 1497.”

We have preferred to give these letters to our readers, because they so vividly illustrate the times of London in that most interesting epoch.

The following year the King was again petitioned for letters-patent in pursuance of another voyage. The favor was promptly and cordially granted, six ships being named for "our well-beloved John Kabotto, Venician," "any statute, acte or ordenaunce to the contrarye made or to be made in any wise notwithstanding."

It is altogether probable that Sebastian sailed with his father's company of, perhaps, three hundred men.

The flag-ship was accompanied by three or four small ships, in which "divers merchants of London ventured" "small stocks," both "slight and gross merchandises, as coarse cloth, caps, laces, points, and other trifles."¹ Evidently this was the joint fleet of Bristol and London making for the historical point of departure, viz., "Cowes and a market." "These ships did shortly after pass gallantly by Greenwich, in the King's presence, one of the mariners standing upon the main top-mast of one of them."² One vessel, much damaged by a storm, was obliged to put back into an Irish port. We hear no more of John Cabot, who was probably lost on the voyage, his son Sebastian succeeding to the mastership of the squadron. "Those ships," says Holinshed, "at the last arrived in the country of Moscovia, not without great loss and danger, and namely of their captain, who was a worthy and adventurous gentleman called Sir Hugh Willoughby, Knight, who being tossed and driven by tempest, he was at the last found in his ship frozen to death and all his people."

¹ Fabien's Chronicle.

² Lanquet's Epitome Eng. Chron.

The extent of the voyage along the North American coast is not known. The fleet must have reached very far north, as many died of the cold in July; and it may have been as far south as the Chesapeake Bay, possibly not farther than somewhere in New England. Peter Martyr, who was an intimate friend of Sebastian Cabot during his sojourn in Spain,¹ says, that Sebastian Cabot went so far north "that even in the month of July he found monstrous heaps of ice swimming on the sea," and that he went so far south that he was in the latitude of 36. In the Labrador region, Peter Martyr mentions the multitudes of big fishes which impeded the progress of the vessels; that the inhabitants of those regions were clothed in the skins of beasts, and that there was such a "great plenty of bears," which used to eat fish, that "plunging themselves into the water, where they perceive a multitude of these fishes to lie, they fasten their claws in their scales and so draw them to land and eat them."

There may have been a third voyage by Sebastian Cabot, for Stow's Chronicle, 1502, says: "This year were brought unto the King three men taken in the new-found islands by Sebastian Gaboto, before named, in anno 1468. These men were clothed in beasts' skins,

¹ Having married a Spanish lady, Sebastian Cabot went to Spain soon after the death of Henry VII., and entered the service of King Ferdinand in 1512. Charles V. appointed him Pilot Major of Spain in 1518; in 1524 he was in the council of Badajoz; and a few years later he went on his disastrous expedition to the La Plata, from which he was returned a prisoner by his mutinous crew. Being unjustly condemned to an African exile for two years, he was pardoned by the Emperor and restored as Pilot Major. We find him in England again in 1548 as governor of a company of merchants who are trying to find a northeast passage to China. In 1556 he is president of a Muscovy company opening a trade with Russia by way of the White Sea. He died in London about 1557.

and ate raw flesh, but spake such a language as no man could understand them; of the which three men, two of them were seen in the King's court at Westminster, two years after, clothed like Englishmen, and could not be discerned from Englishmen."

The famous Cabot voyages were of little immediate result to England, since they did not find the riches of India; but in after years, when men learned that an immense continent, rich in all the great resources of nature, is not to be thrown away, those same voyages gave us the great English-speaking peoples of North America.

Peter Martyr says that Sebastian Cabot was carried into England by his parents when he was "but in manner an infant," and Ramusio's statement is similar, but the English chroniclers generally say he was *born in Bristol*. In the occupancy of North America by the English, the fact that Sebastian Cabot was an Englishman was of such prime importance that the pre-eminence, in the discovery of the continent, due to his father, a native of Genoa and a citizen of Venice, seems to have been studiously kept in the shade. In all contemporary history of England, Sebastian's English birthplace was emphasized, and he was made so prominent in the two voyages—so blended as to appear like one—that were it not for the original petitions to King Henry VII., and his letters-patent, and the letters of foreign ambassadors recently found in the archives of Milan and Venice, Sebastian would appear as the main figure, not only to the exclusion of his brothers, but even to the eclipse of his father. The aim and intention of all this goes to the dispute and ruin of all the

claims of prior discovery. It advances and substantially establishes the right of England by an English-born citizen to the co-ordinate if not the first survey of the North American coast.

The astute and incisive HARRISSE, who has added so much to our critical knowledge of certain detailed facts and dates, is entitled to great credit in the distinction he has achieved by his notes and biographies of Columbus and Cabot. None of the writers who have treated of the progress of discovery have been free from prejudice, each assuming his peculiar views and theories. HARRISSE, who we believe is an American born, although a domiciliated Frenchman, whether naturalized or not, like the Venetian citizenship of Cabot, has his very positive leanings. He cites Blackstone as published in New York to settle the law of England in the days of Henry VII. He assumes that the patent granted to the Cabots by the Crown denaturalizes them upon an arithmetical inference deduced from the date of the Venetian naturalization. He quotes contradictory citations from Richard Eden's marginal note on Peter Martyr's chronicles and from Contarini the ambassador's correspondence. The latter says concerning Cabot: "He said to me, Señor Embassador, to say it all, I was born at Venice, but I was raised and bred in England," whilst, the marginal note in the chronicles affirms: "Sebastian Cabot said to me that he was born at Bristol, but at the age of four he was carried by his father to Venice, and after a certain number of years he returned to England, where it was assumed that he was a Venetian by birth." HARRISSE asks, "Which of these declarations is to be credited?" And he quotes Peter Martyr, who

reports Sebastian Cabot as "born in Venice, but transported to England when but an infant." These are almost the same words as Contarini's. There could be no collusion between the statements, because Peter Martyr's was printed six years before the arrival of Contarini in Spain. HARRISSE does not remark that Peter Martyr as a Spanish writer, and Contarini as a Spanish diplomat, are maintaining the Spanish or foreign side of a controversy under confessed diplomatic and partisan auspices. It is unnecessary to comment on such a biased statement of the case.

HARRISSE, therefore, sets aside the words of Cabot as ungatory because contradictory, and he puts forward what he calls the legal documents and a legal view of the case. The petition addressed to Henry VII., in 1496, is entered in the names of Ludovic, Sebastian, and of Sancho Cabot, and Jean, their father, does not assume or declare himself to be legal guardian of them as infants. The sons, on the contrary, appear in their individual capacity. The letters-patent, dated the 5th of March, 1496, so enumerates the four grantees. It is not a joint concession, and in its terms is an individual grant to each by name, their heirs, successors, and assigns. "Dilectis nobis, Johanni Caboto, civi *Venitiarum*, ac Ludovico, Sebastiano et Sancto filiis dicti Johannis, et eorum ac cujus libet eorum. Hereditus et deputatis."

HARRISSE then appeals to Blackstone's Commentaries, published in New York in 1851, to show that this grant could not vest if the three sons were minors; and therefore they must be of age, which would carry their birth back to Venice, anterior to their father's naturalization.

The parliament alone, he says, possessed this power, without which a concession based merely on the royal grant would have been of no avail. He therefore appeals to the common law of England as an impassable barrier to the claim of Sebastian Cabot as an Englishman, and an incontrovertible proof of his foreign birth, notwithstanding his own assertions and those of all the chronicles and records of the time to the contrary. In this amateur legal dictum HARRISSE does not say that he has proof that the authority of parliament was wanting; *prima facie*, if needed, such authority is implied in the record he produced of the grant, and the record is the proof of such necessary action in the law. The Latin text above quoted specifically mentions the Venetian citizenship of John, the father, and the other names are given separately and expressly without such qualifications. If it was requisite to give the citizenship of John, the sentence is framed so as not to include the sons.

The specious presentation of this subject would be of slight account if it did not allege documentary and legal proof, where the most trivial examination will show the absence of both. Blackstone has nothing to do with it in 1851. The statutes in the time of Henry VII., whatever they may have been, were supplemented and declared in the King's patent and the obviously implied legal action of the cabinet, the lords, the commons, and the whole routine necessary to make such patent good.

We must therefore relegate Mr. HARRISSE to the ranks of the foreign antagonists to the English claim of the birthright of Cabot, and the credit derived from the discoveries of the English sailors of the city of Bristol.


As to the arithmetical deduction from the legal documents, HARRISSE alone presumes the existence of a maritime requirement, which must apply the majority age of twenty-one to a ship's officer or a marine sailor in the age of Henry VII. There never was such requirement, neither in the mercantile nor in the royal navy of any nation, so far as we know. Nelson entered the British navy at the age of thirteen, gained his great renown in Indian and European battles, fought through the American war, and was made a post captain at the age of twenty-one. The difference in time between the naturalization at Venice and the date of the letters patent—the difference between 1476 and 1496—proves that they were of competent age; but as there is no mention nor record of their naturalization or birth in Venice, nor in any authenticated document produced of their abode elsewhere than in England, the arithmetical presumption goes for naught. Ludovico and Sancho have not been thought of sufficient importance, and Sebastian alone, by his discoveries and distinguished career, has been exclusively discussed in this connection. Assuming him to be the second son, as named in the grant, would still leave the fact of his being the youngest open to conjecture. There is no argument whatever, and no fact alleged, inconsistent with Sebastian Cabot's English nativity to be argued from the dates, making twenty years between the Venetian naturalization and the English concession, and the English prerogatives of discovery derived from a citizen of English birth.

In these statements we present an epitome of the facts and the dispute regarding the English claims to

the discovery of North America. The French abettors of Champlain, Cartier, and others; the Dutch presentation of Hudson; the Florentines with Vespuccius, may continue to dispute these questions, but the great result remains exclusively segregated upon the broad field of colonization and possession, that the Spaniards and the English divide the actual and final sphere of the dispute. Perhaps, from this practical point of view, the rest of it, in the curt manner of Harrisse himself, may be dismissed as only among the entertaining episodes of history.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE AFFAIRS OF THE NEW WORLD IN SPAIN.

ET us now cross the Atlantic and see how the affairs of the New World stand in Spain. Columbus judged rightly. Margarite and Friar Buil have been doing their utmost to prejudice the sovereigns against him and his enterprize. The islands they regard as a worthless discovery, containing neither gold, spices, nor anything else worth the vast expense necessary to obtain them. They are simply a good place to sicken and die among savages. As for the Admiral, his administration is most miserable. When the colonists are sick he taxes them with excessive labor; for the most trifling peccadilloes he stops their rations, at the great peril of their health; upon the common people he inflicts the severest punishments, and upon gentlemen heaps the most humiliating indignities. To crown the evils of the new settlement, it was altogether probable that he had perished in his foolhardy continuation of the discovery of new territories. Of course there was a vast other side to the whole matter, on which they were silent. Nothing was mentioned of the great emergencies of the new settlement in the wilderness, calling for almost herculean efforts; nor of the reckless idleness and crime, which demanded severe measures. No one regarded the fact that the supplies taken out in the second voyage were inadequate to the wants of

so many, and that much of it had spoiled; that the Admiral, wishing to relieve the burdens of the Crown as much as possible, hoped to replenish his scanty larder by a speedy development of the resources of the island. Nor could he, in his ready adaptation to every needed industry, sympathize with those delicate souls to whom work was worse than death. But Columbus had no competent advocate at court to rebut the one-sided exaggerations.

In view of all these charges and discouraging reports, it cannot be said that the sovereigns were unreasonably moved. But precautionary measures were necessary, for the more official reports of Margaritha and Friar Buil were sustained by others who had returned from the colony, some of whom were so connected and related as to have no small influence over persons of rank. Some properly qualified person must be sent out to make an official investigation of affairs, and to assume the government if the Admiral did not return, for his brothers had been rendered so unpopular as to make their ruling as deputies unsafe. If the Viceroy were on the ground, he was simply to report the evils existing in the island, their causes, and the remedies to be applied. An important mission this—one requiring wisdom and tact. Who should perform it? Who, finally, but Juan Aguado, whom Columbus himself had but recently commended to the special consideration of the sovereigns?

On the 10th of April, 1495, there was another enactment of great importance to the interests of the Viceroy. Any native-born subject of Spain might prose-

cute voyages of discovery in the New World on his own account, and might even settle in Hispaniola under certain conditions. "All vessels were to sail exclusively from the port of Cadiz, and under the inspection of officers appointed by the Crown. Those who embarked for Hispaniola without pay and at their own expense were to have lands assigned to them and to be provisioned for one year, with a right to retain such lands and all houses they might erect upon them. Of all gold which they might collect they were to retain one-third for themselves and to pay two-thirds to the Crown. Of all other articles of merchandise, the produce of the island, they were to pay merely one-tenth to the Crown. Their purchases were to be made in the presence of officers appointed by the sovereigns, and the royal duties paid into the hands of the King's receiver. Each ship sailing on private enterprise was to take one or two persons named by the royal officers at Cadiz. One-tenth of the tonnage of the ship was to be at the service of the Crown free of charge. One-tenth of whatever such ships should procure in the newly-discovered countries was to be paid to the Crown on their return. These regulations included private ships trading to Hispaniola with provisions. For every vessel thus fitted out on private adventure, Columbus, in consideration of his privilege of an eighth of tonnage, was to have the right to freight one on his own account."¹

Clearly enough, this was an infringement on the privileges originally granted to Columbus, and he complained of it most bitterly. Was it brought about by

¹ Irving's Columbus, vol. ii, pp. 62, 63.

the persuasions of Vicente Yañez Pinzon, and others who had sailed with Columbus? The empty coffers of Spain, the expensive expeditions of Columbus bringing little or nothing in return, and the pressing need of extending the explorations as rapidly as possible—all made the ears of the monarchs available to a plan which would accomplish their designs not only without expense, but with large and sure profits. The privileges thus widely extended were no doubt greatly abused, and did much to bring about that irregularity of method in discovery, that licentiousness and predatory adventure, prophesied by Columbus.

Early in April, before the ships were under way, Torres returned from the Indies and brought the old-fashioned ship news, fully up to the times. Columbus had returned from his voyage along the south of Cuba, and here was the famous official document, in which all the crews had taken solemn oath that they had seen the continent of Asia. At once the mercury of the court went up, and up went the stock of the enterprise in the Indies; for here was more gold, and many animal and vegetable curiosities. The continent of India!—richest country on the globe!—*here it was, authenticated and sworn to by all parties!*

Still Aguado must go and look into matters. Was he not at once the friend of Columbus and loyal to the Crown? He could ascertain the *facts* concerning this unhappy state of affairs in Hispaniola; *that* would wrong no one. Diego, the Admiral's brother, having had the intervention of the sovereigns in behalf of that gold of his which Fonseca tried to retain when he came back from the Indies, would now go back again. But if

the dignitary had been humbled by the royal compulsion to do justice in the case, and by the special orders to be conciliatory toward the Admiral, he had ample opportunity in the long years of his administration of Indian affairs to vent his pent-up wrath on Columbus and his descendants.

Though always considerate of the feelings of the Admiral, it was necessary to send him a letter of instructions. "The number of persons in the settlement should be limited to five hundred, a greater number being considered unnecessary for the service of the island, and a burdensome expense to the Crown. To prevent further discontents about provisions, they ordered that the rations of individuals should be dealt out in portions every fifteen days, and that all punishment by short allowance or the stoppage of rations should be discontinued, as tending to injure the health of the colonists, who required every assistance of nourishing diet to fortify them against the maladies incident to a strange climate."¹

Pablo Belvis must go in the place of Firmin Cedo, to give special attention to the mining interests. Ecclesiastics must be sent to replace those who had returned, for now, as heretofore, the conversion of the natives was all important to Isabella.

What was to be done with the five hundred Indian slaves whom Torres had just brought to Spain? At first they were ordered to be sold in the slave-markets after the manner of the Africans and the Moors who had been the victims of wars and conquests. But they were so gentle, so docile, and had been so hospitable to

¹ Irving, vol ii, pp. 65, 66.

the Spaniards, the Queen's heart failed her. Five days later the order was countermanded until learned and devout spiritual advisers could be consulted as to the procedure. The opinion thus sought came slowly, and was by no means unanimous; so Isabella was governed by the impulses of her own generous nature, and, contrary to the customs of the times, ordered them to be sent back to Hispaniola.

But it is time to accompany Aguado, sailing his four caravels, liberally filled with every kind of supplies, out of Cadiz, in the last days of August, to reach Hispaniola in October. On his arrival the Admiral is absent, still trying to settle affairs in the island—trying to complete a peace with Caonabo's brothers. How will this official from the sovereigns deport himself? Surely he has every motive for good conduct. If he is under deep obligation to the Admiral, and therefore should do him justice, he is under no less obligation to the King and Queen of Spain and to the unhappy condition of Hispaniola. But to these claims upon his good discretion he is utterly blind. Without waiting to investigate the true state of affairs, he immediately grasped the reins of authority. Some he arrested, officers were summoned to account, and no respect whatever was shown the lieutenant, Bartholomew. The latter, taken by surprise by such proceedings, demanded that he should show his commission. He "would show it to the Admiral," was the haughty reply. Presently, however, lest any one should doubt his authority, he had his credentials proclaimed publicly with sound of trumpet. They were brief, but comprehensive—comprehensive because of

their vagueness; like an india-rubber ring, the document could be adjusted to almost any case.

“Cavaliers, esquires, and other persons who by our orders are in the Indies, we send you thither Juan Aguado, our gentleman of the chamber, who will speak to you for us. We command you to give him faith and credence.”

The indefiniteness of the document, and the pompous manner in which it was proclaimed, all told in the heaviest possible manner against Columbus and his brothers. The proud hidalgos, humiliated by labor and limitations of food; the common culprit, but partially punished for his flagrant crimes; the jealous subordinate in office, who would not brook the superior authority of a foreigner; the aggrieved Indian, who could not discriminate between the outrages of the Spaniards and the rule or misrule of the Admiral—all, now, were loud enough in their calls for redress, supposing that Aguado would at once supersede Columbus in authority. The former, in order to appear as peremptory as possible, set out in search of the latter with a body of horsemen.

With Bartholomew Columbus, surrounded by this seething sea of discontent, discretion was the better part of valor. He must be quiet and look on.

Rumor of Aguado's proceedings soon reached the Admiral, and he at once set out for home. The parties missed each other, but Aguado soon returned and the meeting occurred at Isabella. Now Aguado and all the rest were taken by surprise at the conduct of the Admiral. The former, who had anticipated and almost courted a sharp altercation, was completely

disarmed by the cool submission of the latter. But Columbus could not fail to see that his prestige was severely shaken, for even the caciques met in a sort of convention to formulate their grievances to the new officer, who, in making up his category of accusations, seems to have made but little discrimination as to what was true and what was false.

Columbus took in the situation, and saw the necessity of at once returning to Spain to vindicate himself. He resolved to go in the same squadron with Aguado.

It is about noon, and the ships are ready to weigh anchor for Spain. But what mean those sharp gusts of wind from the east, and those dense clouds of vapor rushing through the air? Ah! say the Indians, a *furicane* is coming—or a hurricane, as we now say, having slightly changed the word. Another tempest, rushing from the west, encounters it. All at once the heavens are dark as midnight. There are lurid sheets of lightning and awful crashes of thunder. The sea breaks its bounds and rushes inland for miles. The air is thick with leaves and flying branches of trees. Whole groves, with masses of earth and rocks, are torn from the mountain sides and hurled into the valleys, stopping the rivers in their courses. It was as if the end of the world had come. Some even fled to the caves for refuge. The ships snapped their cables; three were sunk with their passengers and crews; others were “dashed against each other” and wrecked along the shore. The fury of the tempest lasted for three hours, and then the sun shone upon the fearful scene of disaster. Never in the memory or the traditions of the Indians had there been such a hurri-

cane. Surely this was a divine visitation on the "cruelties and crimes of the white men," who, by their outrages, had moved the very waters, earth, and air to judgment!

Aguado's fleet of four ships had been sunken and wrecked, and also two others, leaving only the shattered *Nino*. She was repaired, and another caravel was built out of such ruins of the fleet as could be reclaimed. Behold the energy of the sick-hearted Admiral, who, though doing the greatest possible service for his nation and for the world, is fighting misfortune among strangers and savages—alike his enemies!

But scarcely ever is any part of life all misfortune. Isabella was now surprised by a most romantic incident. A young Spaniard named Miguel Diaz, having had an altercation with another young Spaniard and wounded him mortally as was supposed, fled with some half-dozen comrades across the island, among the savages on the south side. Here he became the guest of a village and community over which ruled a young female cacique, who in time fell deeply in love with him. He, not insensible to her attractions, wedded her, it would seem. But in time his isolation among savages told heavily upon him, and he became melancholy. On seeing this, the kind heart of the native princess was greatly moved, and she resolved upon a remedy. Knowing the Spanish mania for gold, she disclosed to him the rich mines in her dominions, and urged her spouse to invite his nation to locate with her. Miguel and his comrades examined the gold region and soon became convinced of its exceeding richness in the precious metal.

Now, by a literally golden path, he saw his way out into civilization once more. However much the rather severe adelantado may have been incensed at him, an abundance of gold would be an ample peace offering. He and his comrades returned to Isabella, and, lingering about the neighborhood, soon learned that the wounded man had entirely recovered.

On entering the town and relating his strange and welcome story, he at once became a hero. The Admiral, too, was again lifted up.

The ships must wait till the adelantado could journey to the south side of the island and make such examination as might confirm the good news.

He and his party made a forced march across thither and soon returned, saying that alike in all the rivers and in the hillsides there was such an abundance of gold that Cibao was not to be compared to it. Then there were several old pits, as if the mines had once been worked. How suggestive to the Admiral! This must surely be the ancient Ophir, where the ships of Solomon, coming from the east, had obtained the fabulous quantity of gold, with which the temple had been literally covered! What news for Spain! Besides, Columbus had wished to change the location of the colony. The Indian princess, now named Catalina, occupied the site of the present city, San Domingo—an excellent location for a colony and having an abundance of gold in the vicinity. What more could be desired? A fort must be erected at once and the territory of the Indian princess, at the mouth of the Ozema river, must become the centre of operations.

On March 10, 1496, everything was ready for the

voyage to Spain. The two ships were crowded, some two hundred and fifty persons—indifferent idlers—gentlemen probably; those who were sallow and hollow-cheeked from lingering diseases, the disorderly and the profligate—a sorry crowd, filing along the gangways! “Never,” says Irving, “did a more miserable and disappointed crew return from a land of promise.” Columbus was in one ship and Aguado in the other.

But we must not overlook the Indians in these ships, of whom there are about thirty, including the noted Caonabo, one of his brothers, and a nephew. Whatever may have been the Admiral’s promises to the cacique, or his plans concerning him, that savage chieftain remained sullen and morose, being intelligent enough to know that his power was at an end.

What if he were taken to Spain to see the glory of that kingdom, and then return as the Admiral had promised him? Could he ever again be “Lord of the Golden House”? Had not the detested white man taken possession of his kingdom of gold-bearing rocks, his broad grassy plains, and rivers which flowed over golden sands? There have been fair-skinned rulers who would rather die as kings than live as men.

The voyage was painfully tedious. The Admiral, not knowing anything about the trade-winds, instead of steering to the northward so as to take advantage of the westerly winds returning as a reaction of the same, went directly east, thus having either head-winds or calms continually. After a month at sea, he was barely at the Caribbee Islands, his crews tired and sick and his provisions greatly reduced. He concluded, therefore, to stop at these islands, not only for wood

and water, but for as much cassava-bread and other eatables as he might be able to obtain. They anchored at Mariagalante, but soon went to Guadaloupe. But the natives, the women at one end of the island and the men at the other, were decidedly warlike, and vigorously opposed their landing. Fire-arms and gew-gaws, however, soon reconciled them, and the boats landed.

“While some of the people were getting wood and water and making cassava-bread, Columbus dispatched forty men, well armed, to explore the interior of the island. They returned on the following day with ten women and three boys. The women were of large and powerful form, yet of great agility. They were naked and wore their long hair flowing loose upon their shoulders; some decorated their heads with plumes of various colors. Among them was the wife of a cacique, a woman of great strength and proud spirit. On the approach of the Spaniards she had fled with an agility which soon left all her pursuers far behind, excepting a native of the Canary Islands remarkable for swiftness of foot. She would have escaped even from him, but, perceiving that he was alone and far from his companions, she turned suddenly upon him, seized him with astonishing force, and would have strangled him had not the Spaniards arrived and taken her, entangled like a hawk with her prey. The warlike spirit of these Carib women, and the circumstance of finding them in armed bands, defending their shores during the absence of their husbands, led Columbus repeatedly into the erroneous idea that certain of these islands were inhabited entirely by women, for which error, as has already been observed, he was prepared

by the stories of Marco Polo concerning an island of amazons near the coast of Asia."¹

Having made up cassava-bread enough to last three weeks, the ships prepared to sail. As it was intended to make Guadaloupe a sort of key to the Caribbee Islands, it was important to leave the natives in a friendly mood. The prisoners, therefore, were all dismissed with presents. But the cacique's wife refused to go, retaining also her young daughter. It is supposed that she fell in love with the unfortunate Caonabo.

The ships kept to the twenty-second degree of latitude, laboring against wind and current, so that a month of utmost effort in sailing found them still far from Spain, and the provisions were so alarmingly low that the allowance could not be more than "six ounces of bread and a pint and a half of water" per day. During the last days of May the store of provisions was so small as to call for still scantier rations. But where on the wide Atlantic were these hungry people? The pilots, accustomed only to coasting, or navigating the Mediterranean, had completely lost their reckoning, nor were they disposed to accept the opinion of the Admiral. By the first of June famine stared them in the face. Some proposed to kill and eat the Indians. But for the earnest entreaties of Columbus they would at least have thrown them overboard to lessen the demand for food. These mortals were human, he said, and must be treated accordingly. Besides, he had kept exact reckoning and knew that they were near Cape St. Vincent. When night came

¹Irving's Columbus, vol. ii, pp. 84, 85.

on and he ordered the sail taken in, there was a general sneer and discontented chattering. They were nearer the English Channel or France, most thought. When morning dawned and they saw the very land Columbus had named they were ready to pronounce him an oracle of the ocean.

The almost starving passengers landed in Cadiz on the 11th of June, after a most trying voyage of three months. Caonabo had died on the way; died, it would seem, of a broken heart—or of “grief and vexation,” as Bernaldez has it. Having landed in Hayti a mere Carib adventurer, he had allied himself to one of the most noble families and had risen to be the most powerful chief of the island. A veritable king among savages was he, and though broken in spirit by overwhelming misfortune at heart he could not bow to captivity, but was unyielding and heroic to the last.

In this same harbor of Cadiz were now three caravels just ready to sail with supplies for the colony. The four sailing in January before had been wrecked on the coast of Spain. Columbus examined the royal dispatches, and, having learned the directions of the sovereigns and also the general public sentiment, wrote at once to his brother Bartholomew, whom he had left in authority, to be energetic in restoring the island to peace and order, to develop its resources, to explore and work the recently found gold-mines in Hayna, and to begin to build there a sea-port. The discords and unproductiveness of the New World, now become nothing less than noted scandal, must be speedily remedied.

No earthly scene could have done more to confirm

the evil prejudices against Columbus and his "island" than did the sorry spectacle of the disembarkation of his crews at Cadiz. Two hundred and fifty wretched beings—sick and half starved, hollow-cheeked, hollow-eyed, their sallow skins a mockery of the gold they went to seek—crawled out of the caravels, about every one of them ready to curse the day he left Spain. Columbus himself, with downcast countenance, wearing the plain gray frock of a Franciscan monk, a cord about his waist and his beard neglected after the manner of that order, was scarcely more than a symbol of grief. Over two hundred disappointed, angry tongues could do much to detract the Admiral and his West-India enterprise. And all Spain, already advised by Margarite, Friar Buil, and many others, was on the alert to learn the worst things possible from these barbarous kingdoms—this "Mosquito Land"!

But the Admiral had still some grand points to make. His resources for a show of prosperity were by no means exhausted. Then, too, the sovereigns, seeming to turn a deaf ear to all that had been said against him, had written him a most cordial letter from Almazan, July 12, 1496, as soon as they heard of his arrival. Most graciously did they invite him to court as soon as he might be able to recuperate after the exhaustion of his long and tedious voyage.

This would be the occasion for exhibiting what he had just brought from the New World. So the procession, not nearly so large as it had been when going to Barcelona in 1493, started for Burgos, where the King and Queen were to await him. The Indian show was better than before, for the number and

variety were greater. They were decorated in gaudy feathers and gold, and there were princes among them—Caonabo's brother, of some thirty years, with his little son of ten years. The former, christened Don Diego, "wore a collar or chain of gold, which the Admiral made him put on when they passed through the cities and villages." Bernaldez, the venerable author just quoted, says it weighed "six hundred *castellanos*,¹ which chain I saw and took in my hands when I had the above-named Lord Bishop (Fonseca) and the Admiral and Don Diego as guests in my house. The Admiral brought, also, many things used by the Indians—crowns, masks, girdles, collars, and many other things interwoven with cotton, and all having a figure of the devil in his own shape, or in that of a cat or of an owl's head, or something worse, cut in wood or made in the cotton, or whatever else might be the material of the ornament. He had some crowns with wings at the sides, on which were eyes of gold, and in particular one crown, which he said had belonged to the cacique Caonabo, which was very large and high, and on being struck displayed wings, like shields, with eyes of gold as large around as a drinking cup, set in their places in a very ingenious and singular way, resembling enamelling. This crown likewise had a figure of the devil upon it, and it may be believed that he appeared to them in these shapes, and that they were idolators and had the devil for their Lord."

Thus wrote the good old curate, showing how, in those superstitious times, this display of heathen

¹ "Equivalent to the value of \$3,195.00 of the present time," says Irving.

ornaments and symbols may have seemed almost like a revelation, not only from the *new*, but also from the *under-world*—the “*Inferno*.”

In his interview with the sovereigns the Admiral was happily disappointed. He had no occasion to reply to the croakings of Don Margarite and Friar Buil, nor yet to the budget of accusations brought home by Aguado, for they were not so much as mentioned. The situation of the Admiral in the Indies was exceedingly trying and difficult. If he had erred in any particular, it was in judgment, not in disposition. Says Bernaldez: “The King and Queen, who received him very graciously, took great pleasure in seeing the strange things and in learning about his discoveries.” With what keen interest must they have listened to his account of that memorable voyage along the south of Cuba, with its romance of people in long white garments and *those having tails*. Also, there was the account of the amazons in the Caribbees, the love adventure of Miguel Diaz, and the gold-mines of Hayna, which mines were, of course, those of King Solomon’s Ophir!

Being so well received, Columbus was encouraged to propose another voyage of discovery, in order to connect Spain more closely with the mainland of Asia, or more especially to discover the mainland to the south, of which he had heard through the natives. To this end they readily promised the eight ships he asked for, two to be sent at once with supplies to Hispaniola, and six properly fitted out for his voyage of discovery.

But in all this there came about a most painful and

mischievous delay. The sovereigns had already far too much on their hands; and men in office, who were the deadly enemies of Columbus, found many ways of detaining him. Spain was in trouble with France, being obliged to keep a large army in Italy to help the King of Naples recover his throne. Other armies must be kept on the frontiers to keep out French invasion, and squadrons must skirt the coast both on the Atlantic and on the Mediterranean. Then there was about to be a great double wedding. The Princess Juana was to marry Philip, Archduke of Austria, and his sister Margarita was to be the bride of Prince Juan. An armada of more than a hundred ships, with twenty thousand persons, many of them the most distinguished in Spain, was to carry away Philip's bride and bring back that of Prince Juan. Thus, the sovereigns bustling about from place to place, full of care and business, and the treasury empty, Columbus was obliged to stand aside, as in other days, and await the dispatch of all these immense affairs before his few caravels could be fitted up.

Finally, in the autumn of 1496, an appropriation was made. But just as the six million maravedis were about to be handed over, a most untoward incident occurred. Pedro Alonzo Niño, who had left Cadiz for Hispaniola just as Columbus returned from his second voyage, was now returned with his three caravels laden with Indian slaves. He did not make a formal report until after visiting his home at Huelva, but had meanwhile circulated a rumor that he had a great amount of "*gold in bars.*" The slaves were his *gold*, and they were confined by

iron bars in the ships. Ferdinand and Isabella, completely duped by this play upon words, invested the six million maravedis designed for Columbus in patching up an old castle, and ordered his outfit to be made from the new returns of gold from the Indies—*probably from the rich mines in Hayna.*

Not only did this joke cause a long and disastrous delay, but it was turned into a most keen-edged burlesque on the golden Ophir of Columbus. It was one of those seeds of rancorous ill-will which could flourish so readily in the jealous hearts of Spain.

It was only in the spring of 1497 that wars and weddings had sufficiently subsided to admit of Isabella's serious attention to the affairs of the Indies. However indifferent Ferdinand may have become, and however unfavorable the chief advisers of the court may have been, she was still in earnest, and evidently intended to place matters on a firm basis. To this end, every point needing consideration seems to have been thoroughly reviewed, and throughout the changes and provisions made there is an evident design to aid and gratify Columbus in every way possible.

First, all his rights and prerogatives were confirmed and emphasized, with the privilege of transmitting them to his descendants forever. And his brother Bartholomew was appointed adelantado, no reference being made to his having been placed in this office already by the Admiral, an act concerning which Ferdinand had been decidedly jealous.

Secondly, as the lack of dividends in the Indian enterprises had told most heavily on Columbus, who was expected to furnish one-eighth of the investments and

had received no profits, he was exempted from all payments, with the understanding, of course, that he could claim neither an eighth nor a tenth of the profits, which were far less than the outlay.

Thirdly, as Columbus had been aggrieved by the act of April, 1495, granting license for discovery to any native-born Spaniard, under certain conditions, a retraction was now made of anything which might be unfavorable to his interests and contrary to the privileges already granted him.

Fourthly, three hundred and thirty persons in royal pay were allowed him for this voyage, with the privilege of adding to the number if they could be paid out of the profits of the colony. He was authorized to give lands to all who should reside on them for four years, and give proper attention to the cultivation of the same. But all brazil-wood and precious metals must be reserved for the Crown.

Nor were the unfortunate natives forgotten. The Queen could not consent to have them treated after the common manner of captives. The greatest attention must be given to their religious instruction. Leniency must be shown in collecting tributes, and those who failed to pay must not be treated harshly. In fact, measures of government should not be severe, beyond what was necessary for the safety of the colony.

Thus far everything promised well; but when the ships, with their crews, were called for, there was a complete stoppage of affairs. No longer, as in the previous voyages, did all classes, from the lordly castle to the cottage, press and crowd into the fleet, but more after the manner of the first voyage out of Palos, men every-

where refused to go. Herculean labor, sickness, and short rations, with a so-called severe government and little or no gold—this combination of things was repellent rather than attractive. Hence a measure was resorted to at the suggestion of Columbus, according to Las Casas, which was simply a method of instilling blood-poison into the colony. The galleys, the mines, and the prisons were relieved of their criminals, whose sentences were commuted in order that they might serve without pay for certain specified periods in the New World. Those who had been sentenced to banishment for life might thus become free in ten years. Those under penalty for any term of years could earn their freedom in half the time. Finally, a general pardon was announced for all malefactors still abroad, if they would consign themselves over to the Admiral within a given time. Those who had merited death might serve for two years; lighter sinners might get off with one year. But those guilty of heresy, treason, murder, or certain other crimes named could not avail themselves of this offer of freedom.

This baneful measure, more or less common among nations in times gone by, could not fail to bring mischief to the colony. Crossing the Atlantic would not change the evil hearts of these criminals. The corrupt tree transplanted in the New World would produce the same corrupt fruit as at home, being only the more prolific because of its greater freedom and more prosperous circumstances. Nor could Columbus hope to have the grievous perplexities of his government in the Indies lessened by such a policy. And the better classes in Spain would be all the more shy of this poverty-stricken

mosquito-land, since now they would not only have to live among savages and noxious insects, but also among criminals, some of whom had even deserved to die at home.

And still the voyage was delayed. The official department of Indian affairs had been somewhat changed. For some time Antonio de Torres had, to a great extent, superseded Fonseca, but his demands had become unreasonable and the latter had been reinstated. New papers had to be made out, and the unfriendly bishop does not seem to have hurried matters. Indeed, it would seem that his agents, inspired by his animus, did whatever they could to hinder and retard the preparations. The Queen, too, was overwhelmed with affliction in the death of her son, Prince Juan. Such was her sympathy with the Admiral, however, and her interest in the suffering colony, that she used money laid by as the dower of her daughter Isabella, betrothed to the King of Portugal, that she might send two ships laden with provisions by Coronel early in 1498. And it must have been some relief, in the midst of the unpopularity and scorn manifested toward Columbus by all parties, when she took into her own service as pages his two sons, who had served as such to her deceased son.

Now, at length, in the end of May, the squadron of six ships is ready to sail under the command of the Admiral. But his bitter trials are not yet over—they must follow him even to the “water’s edge.” One Ximeno Breviesco, accountant and minion of Fonseca, with “an impudent front and an unbridled tongue,” had been a good mouth-piece for the enmity which seems to have been

so rife in the office of Indian affairs. At the very last moment, as the ships were about to weigh anchor, he was on hand. Either on shore or on the Admiral's ship, he assailed the latter with his insolence. It was the drop which causes the cup to overflow. Unfortunately, the self-restraint which seems to have held out till now gave way in this last moment. Columbus knocked Breviesco down and kicked him—kicked him more than once—kicked him well, it is to be hoped, for he no doubt richly deserved it.

But on the side of the Admiral it is much to be regretted that he should have thus broken down, for Las Casas tells us that this one act, more than all the complaints and detractions of his enemies, did much to injure the confidence of the King and Queen in his government, and, in general, to confirm the reports so assiduously circulated as to his vindictive cruelty. The measures soon after taken for his humiliation are supposed by the above writer to have been facilitated, if not suggested, by this incident; although he deeply regretted it and wrote to the sovereigns some time afterwards, hoping, at least, to mitigate the effect of his unfortunate paroxysm of passion.

CHAPTER XV.

COLUMBUS'S THIRD VOYAGE.



OLUMBUS sailed from San Lucar on his third voyage May 30, 1498. With a new and peculiar thought, he had mapped out a unique route across the ocean, thus working, as heretofore, to a definite plan. He believed there was a continent somewhere to the south, for when he started homeward from his recent voyage along the south shore of Cuba he saw it bending down in that direction, and the Indians had constantly been telling him of a great body of land lying that way. Herrera thinks King John II. of Portugal had the same notion. Then Jayme Ferrer, a distinguished lapidary and traveller, had informed him by letter, at the order of the Queen, how he had ascertained that the nearer one came to the equator and to those regions where the people were black, the more abundant would one find the most valuable articles of commerce—gold, drugs, spices, and precious stones. Columbus would keep well to the western outskirts of the Canary Islands, especially since he suspected French cruisers near the coast; and, making the Cape Verde Islands his starting point, he would follow the equator to the continent in anticipation. Here he would find those black men whom the Indians of Hayti had told him once came to their island from the south and had peculiar metallic heads to their javelins. Some of this metal, which they had given him, had been assayed in

Spain, and proved to be a mixture of gold, silver, and copper. To ascertain the exact truth of all this would be most interesting, and might well give point and purpose to this third voyage. So, standing away to the southwest, and thus escaping that French squadron which might be playing off and on somewhere between Cape St. Vincent and the Canaries, he touched Porto Santo and Madeira to take in wood, water, and supplies. Then he touched at Gomera, one of the more western islands of the Canaries, and, finding a French privateer with two Spanish prize ships, all of which fled at his approach, he sent three of his ships in pursuit. The fugitive squadron had such a start that they could not be overtaken; but one of the prizes, having left six of the French crew behind in their haste, was easily turned over to Columbus by the Spanish prisoners on board. He delivered the ship to the captain and consigned the French prisoners to the governor of the island, to be offered in exchange for six Spanish prisoners held by the cruiser.¹

June 21st, just off the island of Ferro, the squadron was divided, three ships hastening away to Hispaniola with supplies, and three, commanded by the Admiral, going on to the Cape Verde Islands.

The three captains of the ships bound for Hayti are worthy of notice. Alouzo Sanchez de Carvajal was a man of worth; Pedro de Arana was the brother of Beatrix Henriquez, and the cousin of the unfortunate commander of La Navidad; Juan Antonio Colombo, a man of rare judgment and ability, was a Genoese and a relative of the Admiral. They were to command the

¹ See *Historia*, by F. Columbus, cap. 65.

squadron, each a week at a time successively, the ship in command bearing the signal-light. They must steer for the new site of the colony, at the mouth of the Ozema, in the newly discovered gold regions of Hayna, on the south side of Hayti, for by this time the colony would have its headquarters here.

The Admiral's squadron consisted of two merchant's caravels and his own decked flag-ship of, perhaps, a hundred tons burthen and requiring some three fathoms of water. He was in no physical condition for the arduous efforts and excitements of this important voyage. He had hoped to find rest in Spain, but had been tried to the last degree by anxiety, grief, and vexation. Now, as he encountered the damp, sultry weather of the tropics, he was on the very verge of nervous prostration, and was soon down with a most painful attack of the gout and a high fever. But his mind remained unclouded, and he kept up his reckonings and very interesting observations.

The foggy atmosphere and barren landscape of the Cape Verde Islands when the ships arrived, June 27th, had a most depressing effect on him and his crews. The inhabitants looked sallow and morbid, "neither sun nor star" was to be seen, and the goat's flesh needed for provisioning his ships, and the cattle for stocking Hispaniola, were hard to get, so, on July 5th, he stood away to the southwest for the equinoctial line. Adverse currents kept him for two days near the Island del Fuego, the high volcanic summit of which resembled, in the distance, a church with a tall steeple. This was the last point of land which melted away in the horizon.

July 15th, he was in the 5th degree north latitude, and so within that belt of almost dead calm which extends for some ten degrees on either side of the equator. This is caused by the converging currents of trade-winds, on either side, neutralizing each other. The sea was smooth as glass, and the air so scorching hot that the tar dripped from the rigging; "the seams of the ships yawned; the salt-meat became putrid; the wheat was parched as if with fire; the hoops shrank from the wine- and water-casks, some of which leaked and others burst; while the heat in the holds of the vessels was so suffocating that no one could remain below a sufficient time to prevent the damage that was taking place. The mariners lost all strength and spirits, and sank under the oppressive heat. It seemed as if the old fable of the torrid zone was about to be realized, and that they were approaching a fiery region, where it would be impossible to exist. It is true the heavens were for a great part of the time overcast, and there were drizzling showers, but the atmosphere was close and stifling, and there was that combination of heat and moisture which relaxes all the energies of the human frame.¹

Columbus now changed his course, bearing away to the southwest, in order to escape the insufferable heat. He was now approaching that mysterious line running north and south one hundred leagues west of the Azores, crossing which he invariably found such a remarkable change in sea and sky and air, all nature there becoming so much more mild and refreshing. The present voyage was no exception. He soon

¹ Irving's Columbus, vol. ii, pp. 116, 117.

emerged into this reanimating region. The clouds broke, the sun shone, and a cool, invigorating breeze filled the sails. Columbus would have been glad to have borne away still farther to the south, but the ships were letting in the water through their gaping seams, the provisions were spoiling, and the water was well-nigh exhausted. So he followed the flight of birds and other favorable indications directly to the west.

Day after day passed, and yet no land met their anxious gaze along the horizon. The crews became impatient, and the ships were turned north in search of the Caribbee islands. It is midday, on the 31st of July, and there is but one cask of water in each ship, when a sailor at the mast-head gives the joyful cry of "Land!" Three mountain peaks peer above the sea. As the ships approach, these unite in one solid mountain at the base. How suggestive! Columbus had already decided to name the first land discovered on this voyage Trinidad, after the sacred Trinity; and lo! here, as if by a strange coincidence, is the triple-peaked mountain pointing heavenward! The *Salva Regina* is said or sung by all the crews, and the squadron makes for the southeastern extremity of the island, which looks so much like a galley under sail that he names it Punta de la Galera.

He begins the month of August by coasting along the beautiful southern shore, with its groves of palms sweeping down to the very edge of the water. Here, too, are delightful fountains and running streams. If the shores are low and uninhabited, there are scattered hamlets and signs of cultivation in many



TRINIDAD.

parts of the more elevated interior. They sail five leagues before they can find a safe harbor to careen the ships. But the climate is so delightful, every thing is so fresh and green, and there is such a sweet odor from off the land that the crews can only think of "the delights of early spring in the beautiful province of Valencia."

But the ships must have fresh water. So the boats go ashore at a point named Punta de la Ploya, and fill their casks at a silvery brook; but there is no harbor nor people, only tracks—of men and goats, as they suppose, one of which animals—no doubt deer, in which the island was afterwards found to abound—they find dead. Very soon they see the shore on the opposite side stretching away some twenty leagues—the low land about the mouths of the Orinoco, their first sight of the South American continent, but they think it an island and call it *La Isla Santa*!

They must have sailed rapidly, for by the 2d of August they were at the southwest point of Trinidad, which Columbus named Point Arenal. A corresponding point of the mainland stretched toward it, forming a narrow pass, with a formidable rock in the centre. Near here they cast anchor and meet a large canoe with twenty-four or five Indians putting off from the shore. At the distance of a bow-shot the Indians stop and try to communicate, but no one can understand them. The Spaniards get out their wares—glittering trinkets, looking-glasses and basins of polished copper, and elegant little hawk's bells. But the more they are called so much the more do they suspect craft and deceit, and gradually move backwards. For more than

two hours, paddles in hand, they stare, ready to be off at any moment in case of approach. They are an exhibition for an artist—beautifully formed young men, naked as Apollo Belvidere, except a slight cotton turban about the head, so bright and pretty that it reminded Columbus of the Moorish head-dresses, and a party-colored cloth of the same material about the loins. They have bows, and their arrows are feathered and tipped with bone, and their large wooden bucklers are the first which have been found among the natives.

But gifts do not appeal strongly enough to the eye of these savages to bring them near, therefore the Admiral will try music and dancing—they are always fond of dancing, especially to the sound of their rude wooden drums. So he orders some of his ship-boys onto the high poop of his ship, to dance, while one sang to the stroke of the tabor and other musical instruments. But this happens to be the wrong move. The Indians mistake it for a signal of battle, and “in the twinkling of an eye” they have dropped their paddles, adjusted bows and bucklers, and let fly their arrows. The Spaniards discharge several of their cross-bows, and the Indians beat a quick retreat. As they run under the stern of one of the smaller ships the pilot throws a cap and a mantle to the one who is most prominent, and he makes signs for his benefactor to follow them to the shore as they land. The pilot went to the flag-ship to ask permission, and the Indians, suspicious of danger, boarded their canoe and “fled as swift as the wind.” They were not seen again.

But how to account for these charmingly formed

young men of such fair complexion—fairer than the natives farther north, it would seem, or the Spaniards themselves, indeed—was a puzzle to Columbus. Was he not in the seventh degree of latitude, as he supposed?—really in the tenth. Why, then, according to Ferrer the lapidary, were not the people ill-shapen and black, with crisped hair? These people had beautiful straight hair, which, by the way, they did not braid, as did the Indians of Cuba and Hispaniola. The temperature, too, was unaccountable. In these dog-days of the equator, the days even were refreshing, and the nights and mornings were positively cool. Indeed, the crews were in a state of delectation as they went ashore in this salubrious climate, after their long confinement at sea in the suffocating calms of the torrid zone. It is true they can find no gurgling springs or running water, but they sink pits in the sand, and soon fill their casks.

But the Admiral is uneasy because of the bad anchorage. A rapid current is constantly setting in from the east like the torrents of a great river, reminding him of the furious, swollen floods of the Guadalquivir. This would make any return of the fleet very difficult; and the pass between the approaching points of the mainland and Trinidad, about two leagues across, which he names the Mouth of the Serpent, is most dangerously forbidding. Here the current from the east—the great Gulf Stream from the coast of Africa—meets the outrushing floods of the Orinoco, and forms tremendous breakers, thundering as if on reefs and shoals of rocks. At a late hour of the night, wakeful with pain and anxiously watching every

phenomenon in this new and strange part of the world, he was startled by a most amazing manifestation of the forces of nature. He says, "I heard an awful roaring that came from the south towards the ship; I stopped to observe what it might be, and I saw the sea rolling from west to east like a mountain as high as the ship, and approaching by little and little; on the top of this rolling sea came a mighty wave roaring with a frightful noise and the same terrific uproar as the other currents, producing, as I have already said, a sound as of breakers upon the rocks. To this day I have a vivid recollection of the dread I then felt lest the ship might founder under the force of that tremendous sea; but it passed by and reached the mouth of the before-mentioned passage, where the uproar lasted for a considerable time."

The nature of this tempest in the Dragon's Mouth must be ascertained, so boats were sent the next morning to sound the pass and learn if these roaring waters were breakers on rocks or opposing currents, or what. On the return the pilot reported, to the great joy of all, that the waters were deep, and that the currents and eddies set in from both directions. As the wind was favorable, the ships soon made trial of the pass, and dropped safely into a large tranquil sea on the other side. They followed the magnificent curve of the western side of Trinidad, the great and unknown Gulf of Paria stretching away to the west. Some one tasted the water, and great was their surprise to find it almost as fresh and sweet as that of a river. As they approached the northwest point of Trinidad, about 14 leagues from Point Arenal, a moun-

tainous point loomed up just a little to the west. It was the long, narrow stretch of the mainland which bounds the Gulf of Paria on the north. Here, between this point in the west and the northeastern end of Trinidad, the currents met again, forming a more dangerous strait than the Mouth of the Serpent, since it contained great rocky islands. So the Admiral called it the Mouth of the Dragon.

This he did not wish to encounter. Sailing, therefore, toward the west, on Sunday of August 5th he concluded to pass this supposed island, which he named Gracia, at the west end, and sail directly north for Hispaniola. How intensely the crews must have been charmed with the salubrious climate and the entrancing mountainous landscape. All along, the coast was indented with excellent harbors. Stately forests crowned the immense elevations of hill and plain, and there were numerous streams of water. In many places there was more or less cultivation, and the most luscious fruits grew wild in abundance. Two things particularly surprised the Admiral—the *delightful placidity* and the *increasing freshness* of the sea.

How desirous he was of meeting the inhabitants of these parts. But everywhere they eluded him. August 6th, they entered a harbor. Here were signs of cultivation, and the boats were sent ashore; but the inhabitants had fled. There were recent signs enough of human habitation, but all was deserted and silent. But there were many monkeys climbing and chattering in those beautiful and fruitful groves on the mountain sides.

They continued toward the west, and, finding the

country more level, anchored in the mouth of a river. Here a canoe with some three Indians came off to meet them. As they approached the nearest caravel, the captain made as if he would go to land with them, but jumped on their canoe in such a way as to upset it, and the natives, being precipitated into the water, were captured before they could escape. Taken to the Admiral's ship, they were treated to beads, hawk's bells, and sugar. They were delighted, and went ashore to attract their acquaintances. Other canoes now approached the ships. The natives were tall, comely, and graceful as wild animals in their movements. They had bows and arrows and targets. The men, as heretofore, had bright-colored cotton cloths around the head and loins, the colors being so delicate as to resemble silk in the distance. The women were entirely naked. They brought provisions of the kinds common to the natives, but they also brought delicious drinks, resembling beer and wine. Why do they smell of everything—even the boat, the people, and pieces of brass? This is their way of examining and testing things. They care but little for beads, but are delighted with those tinkling hawk's bells. They are also charmed with brass; and, holding it to their noses, call it *turey*—that is, “from heaven.”

From these Indians Columbus understood that the name of their country was Paria, and that farther to the west he would find it more populous. Taking several of them to serve as guides and mediators, he proceeded eight leagues westward to a point which he called Aguja, or the Needle. Here he arrived at three o'clock in the morning. When the day dawned he

was delighted with the beauty of the country. It was cultivated in many places, highly populous, and adorned with magnificent vegetation; habitations were interspersed among groves laden with fruits and flowers; grape-vines entwined themselves among the trees, and birds of brilliant plumage fluttered among the branches. The air was temperate and bland and sweetened by the fragrance of flowers and blossoms, and numerous fountains and limpid streams kept up a universal verdure and freshness. Columbus was so much charmed with the beauty and amenity of this part of the coast that he gave it the name of "The Gardens."¹ What a tour this would have been for a naturalist!

Now the shores teemed with the canoes of the natives—canoes much superior to any they had yet seen—larger, lighter, and with a sort of cabin in the middle. The natives, who urged the Admiral in the name of their cacique to come to land, were quite highly ornamented. They had about their necks, in collars and burnished plates, considerable gold of a rather poor quality, which could be found among the hills not far away. Other ornaments of the same metal they had. One Indian had a mass as big as an apple. But what have those females for garlands on their heads, necklaces, and bracelets? Nothing less than pearls; and they show the Spaniards the shells—mother-of-pearl—from which these have been taken. Peter Martyr says that these Indian women had pearls in such great abundance that the Spanish women "in plays and triumphs had not greater plenty

¹Irving's *Columbus*, vol. ii, p. 127.

of stones of glass and crystal in their garlands, crowns, girdles, and such other tirements. Being asked where they gathered them, they pointed to the next shore by the sea-banks. They signified, also, by certain scornful gestures which they made with their mouths and hands, that they nothing esteemed pearls. Taking, also, baskets in their hands, they made signs that the same might be filled with them in short space."

This so excited Columbus and his crews that he sent boats ashore to gather information, and also to get pearls to be sent to Spain. Now, not only the multitude, which Peter Martyr says "came flocking to them by heaps, but also the cacique and his son came to greet the strangers just come down from heaven. They brought them into the large house of the cacique—not built in the round, wigwam style, so common among the natives, but having a front and ends—façades—quite architectural and large for that country—and having seated them on stools of ebony, finely carved, gave them bread, the most luscious fruits, and their native beers and wines, both white and red.¹ During this entertainment the women were in one end of the house and the men in the other, in the manner of a meeting of the Friends. The strangers are next taken to the house of the cacique's son and feasted again.

These people made a most unique impression on the Spaniards, they were so affable, so martial in their

¹Columbus takes pains to say that these wines were "not made of grapes, but apparently produced from different fruits. The most reasonable inference is that they use maize."

bearing, so keen-eyed and intelligent, so unlike the coarse, black people Columbus expected to find here, almost under the equator. They brought presents, as everywhere else; parrots of various colors, some large as domestic fowls. They also brought the much-coveted pearls, which they readily exchanged for hawk's bells and brass. The finest of the pearls were selected to be sent to the sovereigns of Spain. When they were questioned as to where they found these pearls with which nearly all the women were so finely ornamented, "they pointed to certain mountains," says Peter Martyr, "seeming with their countenances to dissuade our men from going thither; for putting their arms in their mouths, and grinning as though they bit the same, still pointing to the mountains, they seemed to insinuate that men were eaten there, but whether they meant by cannibals or wild beasts our men could not perceive."

"They took it exceedingly grievously," says the same author, "that they could neither understand our men nor our men them." Perhaps no intercourse between the Spaniards and natives was ever more novel and pleasing than this. But Columbus is desirous of getting around the western end of this supposed island called Gracia, so he sails away, dreaming about pearls, according to the habit of his quick imagination. Did not Pliny say that pearls were generated from drops of dew which fell into the open mouths of oysters? This country had an abundance of dew, and oysters so abundant that a branch lying in the water would become laden with them, and the mangrove trees growing along the shore and laving

their boughs in the tranquil waters would soon be clustered with them. Las Casas, commenting on these flights of fancy in the Admiral, notices that these oysters dwelling in shallow waters do not produce pearls; but that this valuable kind, "by a natural instinct, as if conscious of their precious charge, hide themselves in the deepest waters."¹

About the 10th of August the crews discerned points of the mainland to the west of the Gulf of Paria, and thought they were now nearing an outlet between islands. But the water became so shallow that the flag-ship, drawing three fathoms, could venture no further. A light caravel was sent on to find the supposed outlet, but it returned the next day reporting simply gulfs and mouths of rivers with an abundance of fresh water. There was no choice of way. The fleet must go back and out at the Mouth of the Dragon. Nor could there be any delay, much as he might desire to explore this promising region, for his sea-stores were failing and the supplies for Hayti were in danger of damaging. His gout, too, was insufferable, and the accustomed inflammation of his eyes had become so serious with constant watching and loss of sleep that he writes, "never were my eyes so much affected with bleeding or so painful as at this period." There was even danger of a repetition of the entire nervous prostration experienced on his return from the south of Cuba.

The sails were spread for the Mouth of the Dragon on the 11th of August, and the fleet was borne along so rapidly by the currents of fresh water on their way to

¹Las Casas, *Hist. Ind.*, cap. 136.

the sea that by Sunday, the 13th, they cast anchor near the outlet, in a fair harbor, the neighborhood of which so abounded with monkeys that he named it after them—Puerto de Gatos. Here were mangroves loaded with oysters, their mouths being open to catch the dew! The pass of the Mouth of the Dragon, some five leagues across, would have been wide enough, had it not been for the islands which blocked its current and increased the stupendous billows which, contending with each other, threatened to engulf his frail ships. Were these angry waves breakers on shoals of rock, or were they simply the commotion of immense currents opposed to each other—the fresh water struggling to get out and the ocean contending to come in? There was neither pilot nor chart to guide these first ships of discovery. Columbus, having studied the situation and the action of the waters carefully, concluded to make trial of the passage, especially as a fresh breeze was now favorable. The wind died away, however, while he was yet in the tempest of the straits, but he was safely carried through by the sweeping currents into the open sea beyond. The Admiral, with his usual skill in observation, now conjectured that the currents and the overwhelming mountains of water which rushed into these straits with such an awful roaring arose from the contest between the fresh water and the sea. The fresh water struggled with the salt to oppose its entrance, and the salt contended against the fresh in its efforts to gain a passage into the gulf.

Still conceiving this point to be an island, and skirting it to the west, he expected to find a gulf of pearls at its western end. Passing a number of islands and many

fine harbors, on the 15th he came upon the islands Cubagua and Margarita. Here he found a number of Indians fishing for pearls. These fled, and a boat being sent in pursuit of them, there was noticed a female with many strings of pearls about her neck. One of the sailors having a porcelain plate painted in gaudy colors, broke it in pieces, and succeeded in bartering it away for quite a number of the much-coveted ornaments. The Admiral then sent a number of pretty plates on shore, and also hawk's bells, which were readily taken in exchange for about *three pounds of pearls*, some of which, being quite large, were sent to the King and Queen of Spain. Bernaldez says that when he "discovered the Pearl Islands he would allow the men to keep nothing for themselves, except a trifle as a specimen. This produced great dissatisfaction among the sailors, because he had told them that whatever God should give them or throw in their way he would share with them; whereas he now said that the King and Queen had sent them on this voyage to make discoveries, and not to enrich themselves." This only shows that new conditions had arisen, and that the Admiral had grown wiser since the making of the above promise, which probably occurred on the first voyage.

Great was the temptation to explore these regions still further, for the natives mentioned other places in the vicinity which they said abounded in pearls. And that magnificent range of mountains stretching westward along the coast of Paria as far as one could see!—might it not be a part of the mainland of Asia? But the time was come to return to Hispaniola. His presence was greatly needed there, and he was well-

nigh exhausted by the hardships of his voyage. His eyes were now so diseased that he was obliged to give up all observations, even the ordinary lookout having to be entrusted to his pilots.

But if the external vision was closed almost to total blindness, reflection and deductive reasoning were active. His recent observations, so novel and so profoundly impressive, in this hitherto undiscovered part of the world, were extremely suggestive and furnished material for several very remarkable conceptions and generalizations.

First. The immense torrents of fresh water rushing into the Gulf of Paria indicated a continent of incalculable extent to the west and south. It must be that most of the land he had seen about that body of water was in some way connected, the shore to the west of Margarita trending away immeasurably to the west, and the land to the west of the Mouth of the Serpent running south beyond the equator, and so including an immense unexplored territory of the most precious commodities, such as Ferrer had located along the equator. So the old writers, Aristotle, Seneca, St. Augustin, and CARDINAL ALIACO, must be correct in supposing the greater part of the globe to be land—perhaps six parts out of seven, as Esdras of the Apocrypha had said. Who could tell what benignant stars might shine on this boundless, unknown continent? Happy he who should open up its treasures to the civilized world!

These stupendous ocean currents—compared with which earth's mightiest rivers are but rivulets—taking, by some mysterious forces, a well-defined course through the great seas—especially that great equatorial current

—were they not sculptors of the landscape, cutting off portions of the mainland, and thus fringing the continents with islands? Else why do these islands invariably lie lengthwise with the currents? What a revelation to him would have been the earth's grand system of *ocean currents* as we now understand them! But more wonderful still would have been his supposed great continent to the west and south, as well as all the continental lands and the islands of that half of the globe discovered by his wonderful genius, courage, and energy!

But we must not fail to notice still another striking conception, which, however much the learned of to-day may ridicule it, was by no means a stupid generalization, if we consider how little was then known of the shape and contents of the earth. The facts in nature which he co-ordinated all lent themselves readily enough to his hypothesis as to the form of the earth's surface in the absence of that knowledge of other facts which have since corrected it. Is it too much to say that deductions far more absurd have been made by philosophical speculators of the greatest authority in our own day?

"I have always read," he says, "that the world comprising the land and the water was spherical, and the recorded experiences of Ptolemy and all others have proved this by the eclipses of the moon, and other observations made from east to west, as well as by the elevation of the pole from north to south. But, as I have already described, I have now seen so much irregularity that I have come to another conclusion respecting the earth, namely, that it is not round as

they describe, but of the form of a pear, which is very round except where the stalk grows, at which part it is most prominent; or like a round ball, upon one part of which is a prominence like a woman's nipple, this protrusion being the highest and nearest the sky, situated under the equinoctial line, and at the eastern extremity of the sea—I call that the eastern extremity where the land and the islands end. In confirmation of my opinion, I refer to the arguments which I have above detailed respecting the line which passes from north to south a hundred degrees west of the Azores; for in sailing thence westward the ships went on rising smoothly towards the sky, and then the weather was felt to be milder, on account of which mildness the needle shifted one point of the compass; the further we went the more the needle moved to the northwest, this elevation producing the variation of the circle which the North star describes with its satellites, and the nearer I approached the equinoctial line the more they rose and the greater was the difference in these stars and in their circles. Ptolemy and the other philosophers who have written upon the globe thought that it was spherical, believing that this hemisphere was round as well as that in which they themselves dwelt, the centre of which was in the island of Arin,¹ which is under the equinoctial line, between the Arabian Gulf and the Gulf of Persia; and the circle passes over Cape St. Vincent, in Portugal,

¹ “A misspelling,” says Major, “not infrequent in those days, for the sacred city (not island) of Odjein or Ongrin, in Malwa, whence the Indians reckoned their first meridian.”

westward, and eastward by Cangara and the Seras,¹ in which hemisphere I make no difficulty as to its being a perfect sphere as they describe; but this western half of the world, I maintain, is like the half of a very round pear, having a raised projection for the stalk, as I have already described, or like a woman's nipple on a very round ball. Ptolemy and the others who have written upon the globe had no information respecting this part of the world, which was then unexplored; they only established their arguments with respect to their own hemisphere, which, as I have already said, is half of a perfect sphere. And now that your Highnesses have commissioned me to make this voyage of discovery, the truths which I have stated are evidently proved, because in this voyage, when I was off the island of Hargin² and its vicinity, which is twenty degrees to the north of the equinoctial line, I found the people are black, and the land very much burnt; and when, after that, I went to the Cape Verde Islands, I found the people there much darker still, and the more southward we went the more they approach the extreme of blackness; so that when I reached the parallel of Sierra Leone, where, as night came on, the North star rose five degrees, the people there were excessively black; and as I sailed westward the heat became extreme. But, after I had passed the meridian or line which I have already described, I found the climate become gradually more temperate; so that when I reached the island of Trinidad, where the North star rose five degrees as night came on, there and in the land of Gracia I found the temperature

¹Japan and China.

²Arguin, west of Africa.

exceedingly mild ; the fields and the foliage likewise were remarkably fresh and green, and as beautiful as the gardens of Valencia in April. The people there are very graceful in form, less dark than those whom I had before seen in the Indies, and wear their hair long and smooth ; they are also more shrewd, intelligent and courageous. The sun was then in the sign of Virgo, over our heads and theirs ; therefore all this must proceed from the extreme blandness of the temperature, which arises, as I have said, from this country being the most elevated in the world, and the nearest to the sky.”¹

On the 19th of August the Admiral’s ships reached Hispaniola, fifty leagues west of the new port at the mouth of the Ozema. The strong currents, of which he had not yet learned the full force, had carried him far out of his intended course during the less watchful hours of the night. It was impossible to conjecture how much these currents might retard his sailing eastward ; so he landed in order to find a messenger, who might carry a letter to the adelantado by land, thus advising the latter of his safe arrival. At once Bartholomew started in a caravel to meet the Admiral.

Meanwhile the latter was not a little uneasy, for he had seen a native carrying a cross-bow. This was not an article to be sold or given away by the Spaniards. Might it not indicate some calamity like that of La Navidad ? In order to form some conception of the intelligence which Bartholomew was to bring the Admiral, let us go back a few years and learn the fortunes of the adelantado in governing the colony.

¹Letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, describing his third voyage. See *Select Letters of Christopher Columbus*, by R. H. Major.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE ADELANTADO AND ROLDAN.

BARTHOLOMEW COLUMBUS was a man of great resolution and energy. As soon as the Admiral had departed for Spain, in March, 1496, placing his brother Diego over the affairs of Isabella, he mustered a force of over four hundred men, and marched to the south side of the island in order to develop the gold-mines of Hayna—the supposed Ophir of Solomon. On a site abounding in ore he built a fort named San Christoval ; but the workmen, on account of the golden grains which gleamed in the rocks and in the sands, called it the Golden Tower.

In three months this large force had erected the fortress and gotten the mining and purifying of the ore under way. But so many men could not be easily supported in the wilderness, especially in such a mountainous country. Nor did the natives any longer bring their fish, fruits, and cassava-bread ; for by this time some doubt had arisen in their minds as to the heavenly origin of these men—so cruel, so licentious, so eager for gold. Bartholomew, therefore, left but ten men to guard the fortress, with a dog to catch the little rat-like *utia* ; and taking the four hundred into the neighborhood of Fort Conception, in the Vega Real, he called on the cacique, Guarionex, for supplies while he collected tribute. A generous man this Indian poten-

tate must have been, to feed this multitude of foreigners, with such capacious stomachs, and pay tax at the same time.

But in the course of a month—some time in July—Niño arrived from Spain with his three ship-loads of men and supplies. As was generally the case in crossing the Atlantic, much of the provisions had spoiled, and thus the colony failed to receive the full measure of relief it so greatly needed; for, after nearly five years of colonial life in this genial climate, in this land of great and quick resources, hunger still prevailed.

These ships, it will be remembered, brought letters from the Admiral—letters written under the sharp impulses received when coming in contact with the unhappy public sentiment in Spain. Two points needed immediate attention—the gold-mines at Hayna, must be developed, and such of the native rulers and their subjects as had been involved in the death of the Spaniards—for so the theologians had decided—might be sent to Spain as slaves. At once three hundred of these poor unfortunates passed over the gangways into the ship, to be delivered as “gold in bars” on reaching the home slave-market, and, with a new supply of provisions, the adelantado set out for the mouth of the Ozema, by way of San Christoval. “They affirm this river,” says Peter Martyr, “to have many benefits of nature; for, wheresoever it runneth, all things are exceedingly pleasant and fruitful, having on every side groves of date trees and divers other of the island fruits so plentifully that, as they sailed along by the shore, oftentimes the branches thereof, laden

with flowers and fruits, hung so over their heads that they might pluck them with their hands.”

Here, at the mouth of the Ozema, was a natural haven, with a fine entrance, deep water, and a good bottom to hold the anchor. On the eastern side, therefore, he located his sea-port, San Domingo;¹ for here was pure water, an abundance of fish, and a fertile country. The site must have been well chosen, for, after four hundred years, the city is still flourishing as the capital of a republic. The female cacique of this locality, bride of Miguel Diaz, who had invited the white men to locate here, gave them a cordial reception, and ever proved faithful to her promises.

The first building, a fortress, was soon completed; and the adelantado, leaving twenty men as a garrison, took his large force into Zaragua, the most western province of the island, in order to adjust the tribute to be levied on the cacique, Behechio, and his subjects, that province not yet having been consulted on this important matter.

This was a most beautiful and fertile region, and the inhabitants were noted for their fine physique, intelligence, and graceful manners. “With this cacique resided Anacaona, widow of the late formidable Caonabo. She was sister to Behechio, and had taken refuge with her brother after the capture of her husband. She was one of the most beautiful females of the island; her name in the Indian language signified ‘The Golden Flower.’” She “possessed a genius superior to the generality of her race, and was said to excel in composing those little legendary ballads, or

¹ This city was first called Nueva Isabella—New Isabella.

areytos, which the natives chanted as they performed their national dances. All the Spanish writers agree in describing her as possessing a natural dignity and grace hardly to be credited in her ignorant and savage condition. Notwithstanding the ruin with which her husband had been overwhelmed by the hostility of the white men, she appears to have entertained no vindictive feelings toward them, knowing that he had provoked their vengeance by his own voluntary warfare. She regarded the Spaniards with admiration, as almost superhuman beings, and her intelligent mind perceived the futility and impolicy of any attempt to resist their superiority in arts and arms. Having great influence over her brother Behechio, she counselled him to take warning by the fate of her husband and to conciliate the friendship of the Spaniards; and it is supposed that a knowledge of the friendly sentiments and powerful influences of this princess in a great measure prompted the adelantado to his present expedition."¹

Irving has posed this Indian queen so gracefully that we could not refrain from quoting him. We will now quote Peter Martyr, as translated by Eden—all but the old style of spelling—as to the appearance of the adelantado and his men in Zaragua, after collecting tribute on their way, and cutting down the great Brazil trees and storing them. “When the king had espied our men, laying apart his weapons² and giving

¹Irving's *Columbus*, vol. 2, pp. 152, 153.

²The cacique had come out with a great army equipped with bows and arrows and club-like lances; but the military array of the Spaniards—their cavalry in front, followed by the infantry, all marching to the sound of drum and trumpet—had quite daunted him.

signs of peace, he spoke gently to them (uncertain whether it were humanity or fear), and demanded of them what they would have. The lieutenant answered that he should pay tribute to the Admiral, his brother, in the name of the Christian King of Spain. To whom he said, 'How can you require that of me, whereas never a region under my dominion bringeth forth gold?' For he had heard that there was a strange nation entered into the island, which made great search for gold. The lieutenant answered again, 'God forbid that we should enjoin any man to pay such tribute as he might not easily forbear, or such as were not engendered or growing in the region; but we understand that your regions bring forth great plenty of gossampine cotton and hemp, with such other, whereof we desire you to give us part.' When he heard these words he promised, with cheerful countenance, to give him as much of these as he would require."

When Bartholomew and his men approached Behechio's house, "first, there met him a company of thirty women, being all the king's wives and concubines, bearing in their hands branches of date trees, singing and dancing. They were all naked, saving that their privy parts were covered with bunches of gossampine cotton; but the virgins, having their hair hanging down about their shoulders, tied about their foreheads with a fillet, were utterly naked. They affirm that their faces, breasts, paps, hands, and other parts of their bodies were exceedingly smooth and well proportioned, but somewhat inclining to a lovely brown. They supposed that they had seen those most beautiful dryads or the native nymphs or fairies of

the fountains whereof the antiques speak so much. The branches of date trees which they bore in the right hands when they danced they delivered to the lieutenant, with lowly courtesy and smiling countenance. Thus entering into the king's house, they found a delicate supper prepared for them, after their manner. When they were all refreshed with meat, the night drawing on, they were brought by the king's officers, every man to his lodging, according to his degree, in certain of their houses about the palace, where they rested them in hanging beds, after the manner of the country."

But the entertainment is not yet over. "The day following," says the same author, "they brought our men to the common hall, into the which they come together as often as they make any notable games or triumphs, as we have said before. Here, after many dancings, singings, maskings, runnings, wrestlings, and other tryings of masteries, suddenly there appeared, in a large plain near unto the hall, two great armies of men of war, which the king for his pastime had caused to be prepared, as the Spaniards use the play with reeds, which they call *Juga de Canias*. As the armies drew near together they assailed the one the other as fiercely as if mortal enemies, with their banners spread, should fight for their goods, their lauds, their lives, their liberty, their country, their wives and their children, so that within the moment of an hour four men were slain and many wounded. The battle also should have continued longer if the king had not, at the request of our men, caused it to cease."

When Don Bartholomew returned to Isabella, at the

end of summer, he found the colony in a most miserable condition. The supplies recently brought from Spain had been exhausted; the golden opportunity of the spring had been neglected, and, after a five years settlement, there was no adequate crop; and the natives had been so outraged that they had abandoned the neighborhood, and thus deprived the white men of their aid. No one had the sagacity to see that the cultivation of so rich a soil in such a stimulating climate was a surer source of wealth than hunting for pearls, spices, and gold. For want of supplies the gold-mines, too, at Hayna were still undeveloped. Everybody was repining. The sick had no medicine, those in health had no bread, and all were loud in their complaints against Columbus for tarrying at the court of Spain while they languished, forgotten even by the government. There was not so much as a vessel in the harbor to take them home, however much they might wish to go—no way of bearing the intelligence of their sufferings to their friends on the other side of the ocean seas. Here was a state of affairs which might indeed tax the ingenuity and the skill of an inexperienced ruler over a strange people.

Evidently there must be some outlook of hope to arouse these people. Two caravels, therefore, were ordered to be built for the use of the colony. The line of fortresses between Isabella and San Domingo was completed and garrisoned, and those too ill to be of service were quartered in the hamlets about them, as well as in other parts of the interior, in order that they might enjoy a better climate and secure some provisions from the natives. Those left behind were

either too ill to be moved or not in sufficient health to carry on the affairs of the colony, particularly the building of the caravels, and the adelantado returned to San Domingo with a considerable body of active men.

For a while all went well with the natives, but there soon occurred several incidents which moved them to a general insurrection. Two very devoted missionaries had been most earnestly striving for the conversion of the natives in the Vega. They had won over one family of sixteen persons, the head of which, on being baptized, was named Juan Mateo. But the grand cacique Guarionex was the chief object of their interest. His conversion would greatly influence his numerous subjects. These labors were much encouraged when the chieftain and his whole family repeated every day the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, and the Creed. But the other chiefs ridiculed him. Why should he be imitating the customs of these strangers—these tyrannical usurpers? Still, all this might not have influenced him had not a Spanish official outraged his favorite wife. It was no easier for him than for the more civilized to do otherwise than to associate the sins of a people with their professions of religion, and he would have nothing to do with a religion which seemed to tolerate such crimes.

The missionaries, becoming discouraged, moved into the territory of another cacique. But very soon after this departure the little chapel which they had built for the family of converts left behind was rudely despoiled by the pagan Indians, who stamped the images into pieces and buried them in a field. Don

Bartholomew instituted a suit according to the cruel laws and methods of the Inquisition, punishing the perpetrators of the sacrilege with death by "fire and fagot." Indeed, nature itself was startled at so horrid an outrage, they said, for some of the *agi* roots, resembling turnips and radishes, planted in the field where the images had been buried, *grew in the shape of a cross.*

But this signal punishment of the sacrilegious natives failed to have any salutary effect. In his state of nature, Guarionex was far more susceptible of human feelings than of holy horror at a disrespect or outrage in regard to any religion whatever. He was shocked and horrified at seeing his subjects thus tortured and burned at the stake for what seemed to him a mere trifling matter. And the other caciques, who never looked with favor on these strange customs, seeing how he was irritated and provoked, earnestly entreated him to take up arms against these horrid oppressors. Indeed, it would seem that his subjects even threatened to forsake him and set up another chief in his place if he failed to take up their cause against the Spaniards.

Thus this chieftain, naturally so kind-hearted and peaceable, was about compelled to take up the war-club while smarting under his own personal wrongs of domestic outrage and cruel persecutions of his subjects. Then, back of all these provocations, there was claimed to be the fulfilment of a prophecy. Guarionex belonged to a long line of caciques; and his father, many years before, after five days of fasting, had consulted his *Zemi*, or household deity, as to the

future, and was told that a few years hence there should come a strange nation, wearing clothing, which should destroy their customs and make them slaves.

Now Guarionex was ready to join the other caciques in making war against their oppressors. The fate of Caonabo and the confederation led by his brother was fresh in their memories, but they were goaded on by despair, for death itself was infinitely better than the hopeless oppressions, outrages, and slavery to which they had been reduced. The day for paying their quarterly tribute was near; then they could come together in vast numbers without being suspected, and could suddenly massacre their enemies.

But the Spaniards had long ears, and overheard some whispers of the conspiracy at Fort Conception.

The garrison was a mere handful in the midst of the thick of the war-plot. How could they get an appeal for aid to the adelantado at San Domingo? "An Indian made use of a stratagem in carrying the letters," says Herrera, "which was that they being delivered to him in a staff that was hollow at one end—the Indians having found by experience that the Spanish letters spoke, they endeavored to intercept them—and the messenger falling into the hands of the guards the revolted had posted on the passes, he pretended to be dumb and lame; in short, answering them altogether by signs, and limping as if he was going with much difficulty into his own country, he escaped them, because they thinking he had been dumb asked him no questions, and supposing that the staff had been to help him on they did not search it, and thus the letters came safe to Don Bartholo-

mew Columbus, which proved the safety of the Spaniards.

Don Bartholomew's men, enfeebled by short rations, were in no condition for long marches; but Napoleon Bonaparte could scarcely have moved quicker than he did for the relief of Fort Conception. Nor did he arrive too soon, for thousands of the natives were assembled in the Vega, ready for action. The adelantado held a council of war at the fort, which resulted in a plan of operations fully equal to the emergency. The several points at which the caciques had distributed their forces were noted, and the Spaniards were divided into companies of about a hundred each, under a captain, there being a company to each cacique and his forces. They were to surprise the Indians while asleep at night, bind the caciques, and bring them to the fort. As Guarionex was the chief personage, the adelantado was to have the honor of capturing him, which he did without difficulty. Indeed, all the Indian quarters were quietly entered at midnight and each cacique bound, and before daylight—before any of the sleepy Indians could do anything for their rescue—fourteen of them were inside the fortress. The Indians were so completely nonplussed that they made no attempt at resistance; but a great multitude, estimated at five thousand, came around the fortress wholly unarmed, and, with dismal lamentations and howlings, begged for their chieftains. The adelantado inquired into the causes and progress of the conspiracy, and put to death the two caciques who had done most to bring about the insurrection and to induce Guarionex to be its leader. And he recognized the wrongs this cacique had suffered, as well as his slowness

in taking revenge, and so pardoned him. Indeed, it would seem that he duly punished the Spaniard who had committed the domestic outrage which had so deeply wounded him. To the remaining caciques he showed a forgiving spirit. If they were loyal hereafter, they should be rewarded; if they rebelled, the punishment would be severe. This reasonable clemency moved the heart of Guarionex. The insurrection had been put down almost without bloodshed, and nearly all were restored to their freedom. In the grateful emotions of the moment, past grievances were forgotten; and the chieftain made a speech to his people. The Spaniards were brave and mighty, he said, and *they* could not resist them; yet how generous and forgiving they were to those who were faithful! The natives must henceforth cultivate their friendship. These words were so inspiring that, when he had concluded, his subjects bore him away with songs and loud rejoicings. Now the Vega was quiet for some time.

The two caravels building at Isabella were approaching completeness, and the people were not only diverted by the process, but looked upon them as messengers of hope. Perhaps they would bear them back to Spain. At least they might bring them food and medicines.

If the colonists were not able to work the mines, how strange that they were not cultivating the soil! Idleness and repining, rather than industry and thrift, seem to have been the order of things.

About this time messengers arrived from Zaragua, saying that Behechio and his subordinate caciques had their tribute in readiness. Again the adelantado starts for that entrancing country, with as numerous a train as

he can command. No doubt he could enlist more men for this tour than for any other. Again Behechio and his sister, Anacaona, who seems to have about as much authority as her brother, come out to meet him, well attended by their subjects; and the royal train is enlivened by songs and dances. As heretofore, the Spaniards are charmed by the intelligence, dignity, beauty, and graceful manners of the Indian queen.

Thirty-two of Behechio's caciques have brought their tributes of cotton, the bulk of which has filled a house. Having waited some time for him, they greet him most cordially, and offer him, in addition to the tribute, all the cassava-bread he may wish, which latter is most acceptable to the crowd of hungry Spaniards. Peter Martyr implies that they had also corn-bread, as well as *utias* and dried fishes, not to speak of the delicate serpents—or *iguanas*. He says that "unto that day none of them (the Spaniards) durst adventure to taste of them, by reason of their horrible deformity and loathsomeness. Yet the lieutenant, being enticed by the pleasantness of the king's sister, determined to taste of the serpents. But when he felt the flesh thereof to be so delicate to his tongue, he fell to amain without all fear; the which thing his companions perceiving, were not behind him in greediness, insomuch that they had now no other talk than of the sweetness of these serpents, which they affirm to be of more pleasant taste than either our pheasants or partridges. They say, also, that there is no meat to be compared to the eggs of these serpents."

The adelantado is so loaded down with tribute and presents that he must needs send to Isabella for one of

his new caravels to carry it all home. We wonder if the caravel came too soon for the pleasure of himself and his men!

The ship has arrived and is anchored in the harbor, six miles away. Anacaona must see the big canoe and so persuades her brother to go with her. On the way they call at the treasure-house. "Her treasure," says our author above quoted, "was neither gold, silver, nor precious stones, but only things necessary to be used, as chairs, stools, settles, dishes, pottingers, pots, pans, basins, trays, and such other household stuff and instruments, workmanly made of a certain black and hard shining wood, which that excellent and learned physician, John Baptist Elisius, affirmeth to be ebony. Whatsoever portion of wit nature hath given to the inhabitants of these islands, the same doth most appear in this kind of works, in which they show great art and cunning; but those which this woman had were made in the Island of Guanabba, situated in the mouth of a bay on the west side of Hispaniola. In these they grave the lively images of such fantasies as they suppose they see walking by night, which the antiques call lemures; also the images of men, serpents, beasts, and whatsoever thing they have once seen." Then, addressing the person to whom his work is dedicated, Peter Martyr says, "What would you think, most noble prince, that they could do if they had the use of iron and steel? For they only first make these soft in the fire, and afterwards make them hollow and carve them with a certain stone which they find on the rivers. Of stools and chairs she gave the lieutenant fourteen, and of vessels pertaining to the table and

kitchen she gave him three score, some of wood and some of earth, also gossampine cotton nearly four great bottom of exceeding weight." It is a wonder the adelantado did not set up housekeeping with all this outfit!

"The day following, when they came to the seaside," continues our author, "where was another village of the king's, the lieutenant commanded the ship-boat to be brought to the shore. The king also had prepared two canoes, painted after their manner, one for himself and certain of his gentlemen, another for his sister Anacaona and her waiting-women; but Anacaona desired to be carried in the ship-boat with the lieutenant. When they now approached near the ship, certain great pieces of ordnance were discharged on purpose; the sea was filled with thunder and the air with smoke; they trembled and quaked for fear, supposing that the frame of the world had been in danger of falling; but when they saw the lieutenant laugh and look cheerfully on them, they recalled again their spirits, and when they yet drew nearer to the ship and heard the noise of the flutes, shawms, and drums, they were wonderfully astonished at the sweet harmony thereof. Entering into the ship and beholding the foreship and the stern, the top-castle, the mast, the hatches, the cabins, the keel and the tacklings, the brother fixing his eyes on the sister, and the sister on the brother, they were both, as it were, dumb and amazed, and wist not what to say for too much wondering. While beholding these things and wandering up and down in the ship, the lieutenant commanded the anchors to be loosed and the sails to be hoisted up.

Then were they further astonished when they saw so great a mole to move as it were by itself, without oars and without the force of man ; for there arose from the earth such a wind as a man would have wished for on purpose. Yet furthermore, when they perceived the ship to move sometimes forward and sometimes backward, sometimes toward the right hand and sometimes toward the left, and that with one wind and in manner at one instant, they were at their wits' end for too much admiration. These things finished, and the ship laden with bread and such other rewards, they being also recompensed with other of our things, he dismissed not only the king, Behechio, and his sister, but likewise all their servants and women, replenished with joy and wondering."

But the great activity and good judgment of the adelantado were soon to be taxed to the uttermost by the heinous conduct of one of the chief officers of the island. Francis Roldan, a man who had once been especially recommended to the sovereigns by the Admiral, had been "raised by him from poverty and obscurity." Employed at first in the most ordinary situations, he discovered so much shrewdness, talent, and tact that, notwithstanding his deficiency in education, he was made ordinary alcalde, or justice of the peace. Having discharged his duties with fidelity and good sense, Columbus, on returning to Spain from his second voyage, made him chief judge of the island. But he soon "forgot the Admiral's bread he had eaten," says Herrera, "desiring to get into authority by raising commotions, and taking for his pretence Don James Columbus's having ordered the caravel which had

carried bread and wine to Isabella¹ to be laid dry, to prevent its being stolen by some malcontents to go away into Spain, began to mutter among the laboring men where he had some reputation, because he had been their overseer, as also with the seamen, and other mean people and those that were most discontented, saying that the caravel would be better in the water, and ought to be sent into Spain with letters to their catholic majesties, since the Admiral was so long away, that their wants might be relieved and they not perish with hunger or be destroyed by the Indians; that neither the adelantado, Don Bartholomew, nor his brother Don James, would send it, because they designed to revolt, and keep the island to themselves, keeping them all as slaves, employing them in building their houses and forts, to attend them in gathering their tributes, and enriching themselves with gold. The men finding themselves encouraged by a man in authority, such as the chief alcalde, had the impudence to say those things in public which, before, they scarce durst mutter in corners. Francis Roldan, perceiving that the men had declared their minds, required they should all sign a paper importing that it was for the public good that the caravel should be set afloat, thus to engage them further; and because he was very sensible it was not fit that their catholic majesties should know he had been the ringleader of such a mutiny, he sought after plausible pretences to ground his designs. He proceeded farther to persuade the people that the best way to secure the

¹This was a caravel just returned from Zaragua, loaded with tribute cotton and cassava-bread.

friendship of the Indians to the Spaniards was to quit them of the tribute; and advice being brought that Guarionex's Indians did not pay the tribute, and that they gave tokens of uneasiness, Don James Columbus, thinking to put Roldan out of the way of advancing his design, sent him with a considerable part of the men to Conception, where he better carried on his mutiny, and abused and disarmed those that would not follow him. Returning to Isabella, having by force taken the key of the royal magazine, he broke the locks in pieces, and crying, '*Long live the King!*' took all the arms and provisions he thought fit for his followers."¹

This is the beginning of Roldan's rebellion according to a very competent writer, employed as official historiographer of the Indies, and one who lived so near the time of the events themselves that he must have often conversed with those who had been eye-witnesses of the scenes he describes.

In the midst of the confusion resulting from the scene of breaking open the royal magazine as just described, Diego Columbus, accompanied by some honest men, came forth to reason with the mutineers. But Roldan was so insolent that he thought it the better part of discretion to retire into the fort, and he was in such great fear of the rebels that he would not allow Roldan to speak to him without first furnishing hostages.

The mutineers now left Isabella and visited the royal stock yards, where cows and mares were kept

¹ Stevens' translations of Herrera's General History of America, pp. 175, 176.

for breeding in order to supply the colony. Here they took whatever they wanted of the cows and mares, with their colts, killing and eating on the spot as many of the first as their appetites craved, and, going through the Indian towns, reported themselves as in a quarrel with the Admiral's brothers on account of their exacting the tribute from the natives. The Indians should not pay tribute, they said. If they should refuse to do so they would defend them. That this mischievous advice was not dictated by humane feelings, but was used only as a mutinous policy, will hereafter appear from Roldan's own conduct towards the natives. But it was very conciliating, to say the least.

"Many causes," says Herrera, "are said to have moved Francis Roldan to that insolence; but the chiefest of them were ambition of command and to be subject to no man nor to the rules observed at Isabella; and believing that the Admiral would not return because of the information John Aguado had carried against him, he had a mind to place himself in authority."

About this time Don Bartholomew returned to Isabella from Zaragua. Roldan, sustained by so large a party of malcontents, demanded the launching of the caravel, or at least that he might launch it himself. But the adelantado positively forbade it on two grounds—*first*, because the ship was not properly rigged for so long and perilous a voyage, and, *secondly*, because neither Roldan nor his men were sufficiently skilled mariners to conduct the voyage. It must also have been about this time that the foul plot occurred

referred to by Fernando Columbus, who says Roldan "drew so many over to his own party that one day, when the lieutenant was come back from Zaragua to Isabella, some of them resolved to stab him, looking upon it as so easy a matter that they had provided a halter to hang him up after he was dead. What at present the more incensed them was the imprisoning of one Barahona, a friend to the conspirators, concerning whom, if God had not put it into the heart of the lieutenant not to proceed to execution of justice at that time, they had then certainly murdered him."

Taking seventy men, well armed, this arch rebel places himself in an Indian town about two leagues from Fort Conception, which he intended to capture, and then he would "get Don Bartholomew in his hands," whose valor and sagacity were especially formidable to him, and put him to death. As a first step in this direction, he approached Captain Barrantes, who had charge of thirty men in the town where lived the cacique Guarionex, whose wife Roldan is said to have debauched. But the captain shut himself up with his thirty men, refusing to talk with the rebels. "Roldan might go about his business," he said; "he and his men were in the King's service." Roldan, threatening to burn him and his men, seized their store of provisions, and marched to Conception, about half a league distant.

But, like Barrantes, Michael Ballester, an old gray-haired veteran, was true to his situation, and shut the gates against him.

The adelantado knew not whom to trust, so, at the suggestion of Ballester, he got into Fort Conception

to save his life. From here he sent a messenger to Roldan, bidding him to consider the mischief he was doing to the interests of the colony and the service of the sovereigns in obstructing the tribute and stirring up the natives. This brought Roldan to an interview with the adelantado upon the latter giving him security. They conversed through a window of the fort.

"Why do you lead about these people in such a scandalous manner," said Don Bartholomew, "to the hindrance of their majesties' service?"

"I only draw them together to defend myself against you," said Roldan, "for it is reported that you intend to kill us all."

"You have been wrongly informed," replied the adelantado.

"My company and I are in the King's service," said the rebel; "say where you would have us serve him."

"In the dominions of Diego Columbus," said Don Bartholomew, referring to the famous Indian guide and interpreter, who had married into the family of Guarionex, and thus become one of his subordinate chiefs.

"There are not enough provisions in that locality," was the excuse.

"Lay down the office of chief alcalde, and cease to act as such, or even bear the name, since you are against the service of the King," the adelantado insisted.

Roldan now turned his back in the most haughty manner possible, and went away to Manicaotex, the most disloyal of the caciques. Calling him "brother," he got away from him the three marks of gold he was to have paid to the king, and in order to bind him down

as tightly as possible he took away and led about with him the cacique's son and his nephew.

Keeping the natives in awe of him in every way, he allowed those who followed him to live in the most lewd and arrogant libertinism. Herrera says, "Roldan had now got some horses, for ever since John Aguado went away he had provided many horseshoes, which had not been necessary till then, whence it was inferred that Aguado's indiscretion and his ill-behavior towards the Admiral were the occasion of this revolt, and that Francis Roldan had intended it ever since that time."

Roldan's adherents increased in number, and he was more intent than ever on getting Don Bartholomew into his hands. But the latter was warned by Collado, through Rambla, "to take heed whom he trusted."

At this critical moment news came that Coronal had arrived with his two ships, sent ahead with supplies by the Admiral, while he came on by way of an exploring route with six ships more.

The news brought by these ships was by no means reassuring to the rebels. Don Bartholomew, against whose authority they professed especially to rebel, had been confirmed by the sovereigns as Lord Lieutenant of the Indies, or adelantado, according to the appointment made him by his brother, and not only had Aguado's official budget of accusations received no notice at the court, but all titles and privileges originally granted to the Admiral had been renewed, not to speak of other special favors which he had received.

All this was clearly announced by the adelantado, as he now set out for San Domingo with his troops to secure the caravels just arrived. Roldan followed in

the distance, anxious to know as fully as possible all the late news and the moves now to be made. He was also on the alert to draw over to his party any of the disaffected whom he might meet. But he found the passes on the way strongly guarded and was obliged to halt five leagues away. He was also somewhat disarmed when he found that Don Bartholomew had taken a more mild and conciliating attitude towards those about him, seeing more clearly now than ever before how greatly the colonists had suffered from sickness and hunger, and how much had been done to throw a doubt over his authority. He therefore promised full pardon to all the disaffected who would at once renew their allegiance to him. He also sent Coronal, who was prepared to give a clear account of the Admiral's good official standing in Spain, in order that he might persuade the rebels to desist from their mischievous and hopeless undertaking against the authority of Spain.

But Roldan was not disposed to treat with this messenger, who was not only loyal, honest, and competent, but fresh from the scenes of the recent official transactions in Spain. At a narrow pass on the way he placed a body of his men with cross-bows levelled, who cried out, "Halt, traitor! Had you come eight days later, we should all have been as one man." In vain did Coronal point out to Roldan the disservice and mischief he was doing to the interests of the colony, the imminent danger of his position, and the great advantage of improving this opportunity of peace. He "was sent away with haughty and scandalous answers." Roldan claimed that he was simply opposed to the tyranny and bad government of the adelantado, and would at

once submit to the Admiral when he should come. This was the plea generally adopted by the party, some of whom wrote letters to that effect to their friends at San Domingo, entreating their good offices for them when Columbus should arrive from Spain.

When Coronal reported to the adelantado the results of his interview, that officer proclaimed Roldan and his followers traitors. Hereupon the rebels left those parts and went to Zaragua, the most delightful and fertile part of the island. Roldan unfolded his scheme fully to his men. They would not endure the strict discipline of the adelantado, he said, for he "made them keep the three vows of religious men; and besides that, they wanted not for fasts and disciplines, as also imprisonments and other punishments, which they endured for the least fault."¹ He was able to govern them in a different manner, and would take them into a country which was like Paradise. There, supported by the most intelligent, polite, and agreeable of the natives, they would bask in a perpetual sunshine of delight—eat, drink, and be merry. Above all, they could there appropriate as many of the most beautiful Indian women as they might wish. All this was much better than heaven itself to these miserable libertines, so recently escaped from the prisons and dungeons of Spain. So on they went, stirring up all the mischief they could among the Indians on the way, and in every way possible abusing the hospitalities of these simple and kind-hearted children of nature.

The ships of Coronal had brought quite a reinforce-

¹ Life of Columbus, by his son, cap. 74.

ment to the industries of the colony. Over ninety men came in all, fourteen of whom were to till the soil, and the remainder were to work the mines and cut Brazil-wood.

But peace and quiet were not to be secured, not even by the most conciliating measures. So great had been the influence of the rebels and their false representations among the natives, that they had secretly planned a wide-spread rebellion, of which the peaceful Guarionex had consented to be the commander-in-chief. As they could count only on their fingers, it was difficult for them to fix a day for their rendezvous. They agreed to rise on the night of the next full moon and slay all the small parties of Spaniards quartered here and there among the natives, Guarionex attacking Fort Conception. But one of his chiefs, not being a very good astronomer, moved before the time and advertised the whole affair, thus putting the Spaniards on their guard. He fled to Guarionex for refuge, but was indignantly put to death.

This leader now knew full well that there was no hope for him in the fortunes of war, so he fled across the mountains to Maiobanex, chief of the Ciguayans, with his wife, children, and a few followers, and implored his protection. This was the tribe of hardy mountaineers which the Admiral and his men had encountered at the Gulf of Samana on the first voyage. It will be remembered that they had caused the first bloodshed by the Spaniards among the Indians.

Maiobanex received his brother chief with a generous cordiality and faithfulness which would have done credit to the most civilized prince, not only receiving

him as his guest, but promising to stand by him even at the cost of life and fortune.

From these mountain heights and aided by the Ciguayans, Guarionex made many predatory excursions into the valleys, killing many of the Spaniards who were quartered among the friendly Indians, and destroying the crops. Don Bartholomew could see no escape from the necessity of war with these combined natives, and so entered upon a campaign in the spring. This war is so graphically described by Peter Martyr in his *Decades of the Ocean* that we cannot refrain from quoting him, essentially as translated by Eden in the quaint old English rhetoric of the sixteenth century. He says: "The Admiral sent his brother, the lieutenant, with an army of four score and ten footmen and a few horsemen, with three thousand of the island men which were mortal enemies to the Ciguayans, to meet the people of Ciguana with King Guarionex, their grand captain, who had done much mischief to our men and such as favored them. Therefore, when the lieutenant had conducted his army to the banks of a certain great river running by the plain,¹ which we said before to lie between the corners of the mountains of Ciguana and the sea, he found two scouts of his enemies lurking in certain bushes, whereof the one, casting himself headlong into the sea, escaped, and by the mouth of the river swam over to his companions; the other, being taken, declared that in the wood on the other side of the river there lay in camp six thousand

¹This plain was on the north side of the island, between two mountain spurs.

Ciguayans, ready, unawares, to assail our men passing by. Wherefore, the lieutenant finding a shallow place where he might pass over, he with his whole army entered into the river, the which thing when the Ciguayans had espied, they came running out of the woods with a terrible cry and most horrible aspect, much like unto the people called Agathyrsi, of whom the poet Virgil speaketh, for they were all painted and spotted with sundry colors, and especially with black and red, which they make of certain fruits nourished for the same purpose in their gardens, with the juice whereof they paint themselves from the forehead even to the knees, having their hair—which by art they make long and black, if nature deny it them—wreathed and rolled after a thousand fashions, a man would think them to be devils incarnate newly broke out of hell, they are so like unto hell-hounds. As our men waded over the river, they shot at them, and hurled darts so thick that it almost took the light of the sun from our men; insomuch that if they had not borne off the force thereof with their targets the matter had gone wrong with them. Yet at the length, many being wounded, they passed over the river; which thing when the enemies saw, they fled, whom our men, pursuing, slew some in the chase, but not many, by reason of their swiftness of foot. Thus being in the woods, they shot at our men more safely, for they being accustomed to the woods, and naked, without any hindrance passed through the bushes and shrubs, as it had been wild boars or harts, whereas our men were hindered by reason of their apparel, targets, long javelins, and ignorance of the place.

“ Wherefore when he had rested them all that night in vain and the day following he saw no stirring in the woods, he went, by the counsel and conduct of the other island men which were in his army, immediately from thence to the mountains, in the which King Maiobanex had his chief mansion place, in the village called Capronum; by the which name also the king’s place was called, being in the same village. Thus marching forward with his army, about twelve miles off, he encamped in the village of another king, which the inhabitants had forsaken for fear of our men; yet making diligent search, they found two, by whom they had knowledge that there were ten kings with Maiobanex in his palace of Capronum, with an army of eight thousand Ciguayans.

“ At the lieutenant’s first approach he durst not give them battle until he had somewhat better searched the regions, yet did he in the meantime skirmish with them twice. The next night, about midnight, he sent forth scouts, and with them guides of the island, men who knew the country, whom the Ciguayans espying from the mountains prepared themselves to the battle, with a terrible cry of alarm after their manner, but yet durst not come out of the woods, supposing that the lieutenant, with his main army, had been even at hand. The day following, when he brought his army to the place where they encamped, leaping out of the woods, they twice attempted the fortunes of war, fiercely assailing our men with a main force, and wounding many before they could cover them with their targets. Yet our men put them to flight, slew many, took many; the residue fled to the woods, where they kept them still

as in their most safe-hold. Of them which were taken he sent one, and with him another, of the island men which was of his party to Maiobanex with commandments to this effect: 'The lieutenant brought not hither his army, O Maiobanex, to keep war either against you or your people, for he greatly desireth your friendship; but his intent is that Guarionex, who hath persuaded you to be his aid against him, to the great destruction of your people and undoing of your country, may have due correction, as well for his disobedience toward him as also for raising tumults among the people. Whereupon he requireth you and exhorteth you to deliver Guarionex into their hands, the which thing if you shall perform the Admiral, his brother, will not only gladly admit you to his friendship, but also enlarge and defend your dominions.

“ ‘ And if herein you refuse to accomplish his request, it will follow that you shall shortly repent you thereof, for your kingdom shall be wasted with sword and fire and shall abide the fortune of war, whereof you have had experience with favor, as you shall further know hereafter to your pain, if with stubbornness you provoke him to show the uttermost of his power.’

“ When the messenger had thus done his errand, Maiobanex answered that Guarionex was a good man, endued with many virtues, as all men knew, and therefore he thought him worthy his aid, especially inasmuch as he had fled to him for succor, and that he had made him such a promise, whom also he had proved to be his faithful friend.

“ Again, that they were naughty men, violent and cruel, desiring other men's goods, and such as spared

not to shed innocent blood. In fine, that he would have nothing to do with such mischievous men, nor yet enter into friendship with them.

“ When these things came to the lieutenant’s ear he commanded the village to be burnt where he himself encamped, with many other villages thereabout; and when he drew near to the place where Maiobanex lay he sent messengers to him again, to commune the matter with him, and to will him to send some one of his most faithful friends to entreat with him of peace. Whereupon the king sent unto him one of his chief gentlemen, and with him two others to wait on him. When he came to the lieutenant’s presence he kindly required him to persuade his lord and master in his name, and earnestly to admonish him, not to suffer his flourishing kingdom to be spoiled or himself to abide the hazard of war for Guarionex’ sake, and further to exhort him to deliver him, except he would procure the destruction alike of himself, his people, and his country.

“ When the messenger was returned Maiobanex assembled the people, declaring unto them what was done, but they cried out on him to deliver Guarionex, and began to curse the day that ever they had received him, thus to disturb their quietness. Maiobanex answered them that Guarionex was a good man and had well deserved of him, giving him many princely presents, and had also taught both his wife and him to sing and dance,¹ which thing he did not little esteem, and was therefore fully resolved in no case to forsake

¹ Herrera notices that it was the peculiar dance of the Vega which this chief esteemed so highly.

him or, against all humanity, to betray his friend, which fled to him for succor, but rather to abide all extremities with him than to minister occasion of obloquies to slanderers, to report that he had betrayed his guest, whom he took into his house with warranties.

“Thus dismissing the people, sighing and with sorrowful hearts, he called Guarionex before him, promising him again that he would be partaker of his fortune while life lasted.”¹

Maiobanex was so resolute in his determination to protect his friend that he forbade any further communication with Don Bartholomew. To this end he stationed guards along the various passes, with orders to kill any who might be sent to treat of peace. Meanwhile the adelantado sent two messengers, the one a prisoner from the Ciguayans and the other a friendly island man; but they were both slain on the way. When Don Bartholomew, who followed closely with ten footmen and four horsemen, found his messengers lying dead in the path, the arrows still sticking in their bodies, his rage was thoroughly aroused, and he resolved to subdue this tribe utterly.

As he approached the encampment of Maiobanex the chiefs and men about this true-hearted man all forsook him and fled. They could not face the spears, swords, cross-bows, and war-horses of the Spaniards. Maiobanex, with his family and a few faithful friends, now took refuge in the mountains. Several of the Ciguayans hunted for Guarionex, intending to deliver him up as the cause of their ruin, but he too had fled to the

¹ Herrera says the chiefs both wept, Maiobanex comforting his friend and promising to protect him even at the loss of his kingdom.

dens and caves of the highest rocky peaks, there wandering alone in his grief and peril.

Three months of hardship and privation in the mountains had worn out the Spaniards. The natives had fled. Their villages were desolate. Why should the white men endure their fatigue and hunger any longer? Cassava-bread, roots, herbs, and the few little *utias* caught by their hounds, with water only, "sometimes sweet and sometimes muddy, savoring of the marshes"—this was poor fare for these elegant soldiers, accustomed to the luxuries of Spain. Sleeping in the open air, under trees, exposed to the damp, chilly air of the mountains, was not to be kept up longer than was necessary. Besides, what would become of their farms in the Vega? Don Bartholomew dismissed all but thirty. With these he would search "from town to town and from hill to hill" till he should find the two caciques.

This was no easy task in such a vast wilderness, now so utterly abandoned that there was neither sight nor sound of the natives. If one of these occasionally strayed among the desolate habitations, he protested utter ignorance of the whereabouts of the chiefs. One day, however, several Spaniards who were hunting *utias* came across "two familiars" of Maiobanex, who were stealing forth to procure some cassava-bread for their chief. They were at once examined by the adelantado as to the hiding-place of the cacique, "and though they wonderfully kept the secret they were entrusted with by their lord, after having been much racked, they confessed where he was."

These poor men, fresh from the rack, were com-

pelled to act as guides. Twelve of the Spaniards stripped themselves, and having tattooed their naked bodies, after the manner of the natives, with a black and red paint made from certain fruits, and wrapped their swords in palm leaves, accompanied them to the hiding-place of the cacique and his household. They drew their swords and took them prisoners, the adelantado returning with them to Fort Conception.

In the cacique's household was a sister of his, wife of another cacique, who had not yet encountered the Spaniards. She was a model of female beauty and attractiveness, having left her home to comfort her brother in his wanderings. At once came her husband begging for her release with tears and pledging his fidelity as an ally. The wife was given up, along with several other subjects who had been taken, and Herrera says the Indian was so thankful that he brought four or five thousand Indians with *coas*, which are staves hardened in the fire, used by them instead of spades, for him to appoint where he should grow corn for him. The place was accordingly appointed, and they made such a plantation as would be then worth 3,000 ducats. All the Ciguayans conceived that since Don Bartholomew had set that lady at liberty, she being very famous in the country, they might obtain the same for their king. Many of them went with presents of *utias* and fish, which was what their country afforded, to beg him, promising that he should ever after continue in obedience. He set the queen, the children, and the servants at liberty, but would not release the king. Guarionex, being distressed with want in the place where he lay hid, went out to seek something to eat,

and being seen by the Ciguayans, they going to visit Maiobanex, acquainted Don Bartholomew, who immediately sent some men and they conducted him to Fort Conception.

Sir Arthur Helps thinks, "the two caciques probably shared the same prison," and adds, "thus concludes a story which, if it had been written by some Indian Plutarch and the names had been more easy to pronounce, might have taken its just place amongst the familiar and household stories which we tell our children, to make them see the beauty of great actions."

CHAPTER XVII.

COLUMBUS AND ROLDAN'S REBELLION.



COLUMBUS reached Hispaniola on his third voyage to find his organization of system among the natives nearly broken up, the plan of taxation demoralized, and his chief justice, Roldan, in rebellion. However much an overtaxation may have done to bring about the former result, its immediate occasion, at least, was the insinuating influence of the arch rebel. The natives were encouraged to throw off all restraint, and every industry was at a stand-still. The Golden Tower rose almost solitary on the banks of the Ozema; the mountains of Cibao were virtually forsaken, the fertile Vega Real and other plains scarcely less fruitful and inviting were almost unbroken by the husbandman; the missionary work had a mere nominal existence among a people who had learned to despise the cross on account of the atrocities committed by those who bore it, for it had come to be the symbol of the most shocking cruelties and excesses rather than the emblem of the tender mercies of Jesus of Nazareth. Whereas a Christian civilization might have been an incalculable means of elevation to the kind and simple-hearted natives, their numbers had been thinned by oppressions and devastating wars, and the last scintilla of their hopes had been darkened. Demoralized, terrified, scattered, and starving, they looked upon those

whom they had recently hailed as from heaven to be more like demons escaped from the infernal pit.

Scarcely less deplorable was the condition of the white man. Idleness and vice had induced want and disease. The ill-usage of the natives, who had been serviceable in so many ways, had driven them away in indignation and dismay. Rebellion had embittered the souls of many. The remainder were sad and disheartened by the gloomy outlook.

In the midst of all this disappointment and pressing poverty of the island, the first undertaking for the Admiral, weary and sick from the long and exciting voyage, was the conciliation of Roldan's unreasonable rebellion. In addition to the disheartening tale of their doings which his brothers and allies had to report, the three ships which he had sent in advance when at the Cape Verde Islands, and which reached San Domingo some time after his arrival, brought additional accounts which were of a most trying nature. These ships, guided by men new to the route, had been carried past their proper landing-place by the strong currents, and so came, unfortunately, to that part of the island infested by the rebels. They, taking the shrewdest possible advantage of this occurrence, went on board the ships in the most cordial manner, and gave as their reason for being in that part of the island the procuring of provisions and the preserving of good order among the natives. On the strength of this plea, they got possession of a large proportion of the supplies brought by the ships, and had an opportunity for disaffecting, on the sly, many of these miserable characters, who, if they had had their just deserts, would have been inside of prison walls or

hanging on gibbets. Herrera says: "Roldan, inculcating to them that they were going to lead a very painful life, for that they should be obliged to labor and dig, with much hunger and want, easily persuaded them to stay with him, telling them, at the same time, how they should live with him, which was going about from one town to another, taking the gold and what else they thought fit." Peter Martyr, speaking more plainly still, says Roldan "seduced" these men, "promising them in the stead of mattocks, wench's paps; for labor, pleasure; for hunger, abundance; and for weariness and watching, sleep and quietness." Satan himself could scarcely have made a more seductive appeal to these subjects of a state-prison.

Both wind and currents were against the return of these ships to their port, so that it would take two or three months to sail to San Domingo. So the three captains resolved to expedite affairs by a special adjustment. As the laborers on board were under pay from the time they left Spain, John Antonio Columbus would take some forty of them to the Admiral by land; Arana would take charge of the ships in such moves as it was necessary for them to make till the weather was favorable to their leaving for San Domingo; and as the rebellious attitude of Roldan had been discovered, Carvajal would spend his time in trying to bring him to a reconciliation with the Admiral. But when, on the second day after their arrival, John Antonio Columbus had gotten his forty men on the land, all but eight went immediately over to Roldan. He earnestly appealed to this rebel leader to dissuade them from such a procedure, especially as they were under pay for the royal

service. Whatever might be his variance with the adelantado, he owed loyalty to the King. But Roldan was very soft-hearted about the matter. His was a religious order of the utmost freedom, he said, and he could not consistently use any force to keep those away who might wish to go with him.

It soon became obvious that the only safe way was for the ships to put out for San Domingo at once, in the teeth of wind and storm, lest defection should spread still further among the crews. Carvajal, however, remained still longer, endeavoring to persuade the rebels to return to allegiance.

Though the distance was short, the ships, contending with wind and current, reached San Domingo with delay and difficulty. That one which Carvajal had brought over struck on a sand-bank, lost her rudder, and sprang a leak. The length of time since the departure from Spain had consumed a great part of the provisions, and much of the rest was seriously damaged. Carvajal soon arrived by land to report failure in his efforts to bring the rebels to terms of reconciliation, but Roldan had promised to state his grievances to the Admiral and to be ready for some peaceful adjustment as soon as he might learn of his arrival. Carvajal and others thought that a general pardon for past offences would secure allegiance.

The outlook was exceedingly perplexing. The approach of Roldan, though ostensibly for peace, might seduce many of the discontented, and the persistent effort on the part of the rebels to make the people believe that Columbus and his brothers intended to detain the colonists against their wishes, in order to

accomplish their own selfish purposes, would have its effect. Evidently it would be best for all the homesick and disaffected to be sent back to Spain at once. As there were five vessels nearly ready to sail, the Admiral announced free passage, provisions, and pay for all who might wish to return.

He warned Ballester at Fort Conception to be on his guard for the attacks of Roldan, to seek an interview with him, offering him full pardon for the past if he would at once return to loyalty. This new process entirely did away with the act of the adelantado declaring him and his men rebels. Ballester was also to invite Roldan to come to San Domingo in order to adjust terms of reconciliation, the Admiral offering, if it were required, a written assurance of a safe conduct. This message had barely arrived when Ballester learned that the rebels were assembling about ten leagues away, at Bonaó, where Requielme, one of the leaders, had large possessions.

Irving, following Las Casas, says: "Ballester was a venerable man, gray-headed, and of a soldier-like demeanor. Loyal, frank, and virtuous, of a serious disposition and great simplicity of heart, he was well chosen as a mediator with rash and profligate men; being calculated to calm their passions by his sobriety, to disarm their petulance by his age, to win their confidence by his artless probity, and to awe their licentiousness by his spotless virtue."

This man of weighty character met the rebels in full force at Bonaó, and they were in the most self-complacent and haughty mood possible. The Admiral's offer of pardon, so generous in view of their heinous deeds, they utterly scorned. They were not

coming to seek peace, but to demand that the Admiral should deliver to them those Indians recently captured and about to be sent to Spain ; for Roldan, as chief justice, had promised to protect them. Till these Indians were delivered there could be no peace. Roldan even claimed to control the fortunes of the Admiral, who, if he were not careful, would yet be obliged to beg pardon of him.

How much Roldan cared for the Indians is best seen in his outrageous treatment of them generally ; but to champion the rights of the enslaved natives was a convenient point to make at this juncture, when the Queen was especially solicitous to liberate the suffering subjects of this new country, and he was shrewd enough to poise the present attitude of his unwarranted rebellion thereon. Roldan having taunted Columbus with the statement that only the gentlemen about him were loyal, he concluded to make a test of the matter, and so ordered his men to appear under arms. About seventy presented themselves, and scarcely more than half of these could be trusted. One was lame, another was sick, and some had relatives or friends among those in rebellion. It was obvious at a glance that Columbus could command no armed force adequate to the occasion. To attempt it would only betray his weakness. The situation was most humiliating, and compromise with this most unreasonable rebellion was become a necessity. The five ships detained in the harbor with the hope of sending back to Spain such of the rebels as might prove incorrigible, and of bearing more favorable tidings to the sovereigns, must be under way, for their sup-

plies were wasting, the suffering Indians on board were perishing, some of them suffocating with heat in the holds, and some of them plunging overboard and making their escape. Then, too, the discontented about him must be gotten away before they could communicate with their friends in rebellion.

October 18th, the ships sailed. Las Casas states that his father returned to Spain in one of them, and so must have been able to furnish him with many of the facts of his important history. Columbus sent to the sovereigns a most interesting letter, the abstract of which, given by Irving, is so lucid that we here quote it :

“Columbus wrote to the sovereigns an account of the rebellion, and of his proffered pardon being refused. As Roldan pretended it was a mere quarrel between him and the adelantado, of which the Admiral was not an impartial judge, the latter entreated that Roldan might be summoned to Spain, where the sovereigns might be his judges ; or that an investigation might take place in presence of Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal, who was friendly to Roldan, and of Miguel Ballester, a witness on the part of the adelantado. He attributed, in a great measure, the troubles of this island to his own long detention in Spain, and the delays thrown in his way by those appointed to assist him, who had retarded the departure of the ships with supplies until the colony had been reduced to the greatest scarcity. Hence had arisen discontent, murmuring, and finally rebellion. He entreated the sovereigns, in the most pressing manner, that the affairs of the colony might not be neglected, and those at Seville who had charge

of its concerns might be instructed at least not to devise impediments instead of assistance. He alluded to his chastisement of the contemptible Ximeno Brevisco, the insolent minion of Fonseca, and entreated that neither that nor any other circumstance might be allowed to prejudice him in the royal favor through the misrepresentations of designing men. He assured them that the natural resources of the island required nothing but good management to supply all the wants of the colonists, but that the latter were indolent and profligate. He proposed to send home by every ship, as in the present instance, a number of the discontented and worthless, to be replaced by sober and industrious men. He begged also that ecclesiastics might be sent out for the instruction and conversion of the Indians and, what was equally necessary, for the reformation of the dissolute Spaniards. He required, also, a man learned in the law to officiate as judge over the island, together with several officers of the royal revenue."

The same author continues: "Nothing could surpass the soundness and policy of these suggestions; but, unfortunately, one clause marred the moral beauty of this excellent letter. He requested that for two years longer the Spaniards might be permitted to employ the Indians as slaves, only making use of such, however, as were captured in wars and insurrections. Columbus had the usage of the age in excuse for this suggestion, but it was at variance with his usual benignity of feeling and his paternal conduct towards these unfortunate people."

The Admiral's interesting letter detailing the facts

of his third voyage was sent separately, and is so well known in the English translation given in Major's Select Letters as to need no extended notice here.

The rebels also wrote to Spain, giving the most plausible excuses for their attitude, claiming, as usual, that the Admiral and his brothers were selfish, tyrannical, and cruel. Since Roldan and his company, now numbering a hundred or more, had many friends and relatives in the mother country, and there were not wanting at the court those who were jealous of the Admiral, they had a great and unequal influence against the foreign adventurer.

The criminations and recriminations included in these opposing reports to the sovereigns are given as follows by Peter Martyr, who was a courtier at the time: "They accuse the Admiral and his brother," said he, "to be unjust men, cruel enemies, and shedders of Spanish blood, declaring that upon every light occasion they would rack them, hang them, and head them, and that they took pleasure therein, and that they departed from them as from cruel tyrants and wild beasts rejoicing in blood; also the King's enemies; affirming likewise that they perceived their intent to be none other than to usurp the empire of the islands, which thing, they said, they suspected by a thousand conjectures, and especially in that they would permit none to resort to the gold-mines, but only such as were their familiars.

"The Admiral, on the contrary part, when he desired aid of the King to infringe their insolvency, avouched that all those his accusers which had advised such lies against him were naughty fellows,

abominable knaves and villains, thieves, bawds, ruffians, adulterers and ravishers of women, false perjured vagabonds, and such as had been either convicts in prisons or fled from fear of judgment, thus escaping punishment but not leaving vice, wherein they still continued and brought the same with them to the island, living there in like manner as before, in theft, lechery, and all kinds of mischief, and so given to idleness and sleep that, whereas they were brought thither for miners and scullions, they would not now go one furlong from their houses except they were borne on men's backs.

“To this office they put the miserable island men, whom they handled most cruelly. For lest their hands should discontinue the shedding of blood, and the better to try their strength and manhood, they used now and then, for their pastime, to strive among themselves and prove who could most cleverly with sword, at one stroke, strike off the head of an innocent, so that he who could with most agility make the head of one of these poor wretches to flee quite and clean from the body to the ground at one stroke, he was the best man and counted most honorable.”

This same horrid diversion by the Spaniards in the Indies is related by Las Casas.

The three ships still in the harbor were designed for Don Bartholomew, in order that he might continue the exploration of the coast of Paria, which the Admiral had been obliged to pass by so hastily. But the adelantado could not be spared till the rebels had been brought to terms; for at any moment, in case of their making an attack, his active valor might be needed.

Hence the reconciliation of this "handful of ruffians" was now the pressing necessity.

Was there any truth in the charge so generally made—that Roldan's rebellion was brought about by the too severe rule of Don Bartholomew? Las Casas, who witnessed a full investigation of that officer's conduct in this matter, "acquits him of all charges of the kind, and affirms that, with respect to Roldan in particular, he had exerted great forbearance." But Columbus would be on the safe side. On the 20th of October he wrote to Roldan in the most conciliating—one might almost say patronizing—language. Would he not, in view of past kindnesses, do away with this quarrel between him and the *adelantado*? The common good, as well as his former good standing with the sovereigns, pointed alike to the desirability of such a step. He need not fear molestation in case he and his companions would come to him. They might have a safe conduct.

Who should be the bearer of this important letter? The rebels had refused to treat with any one but Carvajal, but his fidelity was seriously doubted, without just foundation, however, as we shall hereafter see. The reasons presented against him were apparently strong and decidedly formidable in number, but Columbus, who was always charitable in his judgments, gave him the benefit of the doubt, and so made him his messenger. Nor did he ever have occasion to regret it.

But the messenger was scarcely out of sight when a letter arrived signed jointly by the leaders of the rebellion, and written several days before. This letter

put a new phase on their affairs. Not only did they deny the charge of being in rebellion, "but claimed great merit" for not having done more mischief. They had dissuaded their fellows from killing the adelantado in revenge for his cruel oppressions, prevailing on them to await the Admiral's return for redress. It was now a month since his return. During all this time they had waited patiently, expecting to receive some orders from him, but all in vain. He had shown only irritation and ill-will. In point of honor and safety, therefore, they now formally demanded discharge from his service.

Meanwhile, Carvajal and Ballester presented the Admiral's letter, and exhausted their powers of persuasion with view to a reconciliation. Having right, truth, personal influence, and the authority of Spain on their side, they succeeded in winning the judgment of the leaders, so that they even mounted their horses in order to confer with the Admiral; but the body of their followers were too thick-headed and corrupt to be amenable to reason, and they immediately set up a noisy clamor in opposition. The idle, roaming, licentious life which they were living they would on no account exchange for the industrial and moral discipline of the colony. This was a matter which concerned them all, they said, and no arrangement should be made, therefore, without their knowledge and consent. Let all propositions be made in writing, and so be made clear to the public. This uproar continued for one or two days, and then Roldan wrote to the Admiral that his followers objected to his coming to San Domingo without a passport to protect him and his companions.

Scarcely more assuring was the letter from Ballester, urging an agreement to whatever the rebels might demand, since their force, already so strong, was continually increasing, the soldiers of his own garrison deserting and going over to them daily. Unless some compromise were made at once and the incorrigible and dissatisfied sent to Spain, the government of the colony would be in the most imminent danger, not to speak of the peril which might threaten the person of the Admiral himself. Even if the officers and gentlemen about him should prove faithful, he could not depend on the rank and file of the people.

Columbus realized the crisis of the moment. There was no choice left to him. He sent the passport. But when Roldan arrived it was evident that he had come to gain adherents rather than to effect a reconciliation. His demands were so numerous, arrogant, and unreasonable that Columbus, notwithstanding the threatening danger and his willingness to make large concessions, could not admit them. Roldan left, promising to send in his terms in writing. "But that they might not have cause to complain," says Columbus's son, Fernando, "or say he was too stiff in this affair, he ordered a general pardon to be proclaimed, and to be thirty days upon the gates of the fort, the purport whereof was as follows :

"That forasmuch as during his absence in Spain some difference had occurred between the lieutenant and the chief justice, Roldan, and other persons who had fled with him, notwithstanding anything that had happened, they might all in general, and every one in particular, safely come to serve their Catholic Majesties,

as if no difference had ever been, and that whosoever would go into Spain should have his passage and an order to receive his pay, as was usual with others, provided they presented themselves before the Admiral within thirty days to receive the benefit of this pardon, protesting that in case they did not appear within the time limited they should be proceeded against according to the course of law."

Surely this was opening the door wide enough for any reasonable person among the rebels to find his way back into the royal service with honor.

Carvajal carried a copy of the proclamation to Fort Conception, where he found Roldan besieging Ballester, having shut off his supply in order to force him to surrender. This was done, the rebels claimed, in order that they might arrest a man whom Roldan wished to execute. Carvajal delivered to Roldan the Admiral's letter, which stated the reason why he could not agree to his propositions, and saying that if he would draw up such articles of agreement as Carvajal, and Salamanca, his steward who had accompanied him, could sign, he would sign them also.

The proclamation posted on the fort the rebels scoffed at, saying the Admiral would soon be obliged to beg their pardon. After the earnest expostulations of Carvajal, the following articles were drawn up by Roldan to be submitted to the Admiral:¹

I. That the Lord Admiral give him two good ships, and in good order, according to the judgment of able seamen, to be delivered to him at the port of Zaragua, because most of his followers were there and because

¹ Life of Columbus, by his Son.

there is no other port more commodious to provide and prepare victualling and other necessaries, where the said Roldan and his company shall embark and sail for Spain, if so God please.

II. That his Lordship shall give an order for the payment of the salaries due to them all till that day, and letters of recommendation to their Catholic Majesties that they may cause them to be paid.

III. That he shall give them slaves for the service they have done in the island, and their sufferings, and certify the said gift; and because some of them have women big with child, or delivered, if they carry them away they shall pass instead of such slaves they were to have; and the children shall be free, and they may take them along with them.

IV. His Lordship shall put into the aforesaid ships all the provisions requisite for that voyage, as have been given to others before; and because he could not furnish them with bread, the judge and his company have leave to provide in the country, and that they have thirty hundredweight of biscuit allowed them, or for want of it thirty sacks of corn, to the end that if the cassava or Indian bread should spoil, as might easily happen, they may subsist upon the aforesaid biscuit or corn.

V. That his Lordship shall give a safe conduct for such persons as shall come to receive the orders for their pay.

VI. Forasmuch as some goods belonging to several persons who are with Roldan have been seized, his Lordship shall order restitution to be made.

VII. That his Lordship shall write a letter to their

Catholic Majesties acquainting them that the said Roldan's swine remain in the island for the inhabitants' provision, being one hundred and twenty great ones and two hundred and thirty small, praying their Highnesses to allow him the price for them they would have bore in the island; the which swine were taken from him in February, 1498.

VIII. That his Lordship shall give the said Roldan full authority to sell some goods he has, which he must part with to go away, or to do with them as he pleases, or to leave them for his own use with whom he thinks fit, to make the best of them.

IX. That his Lordship will order the judges to give speedy judgment concerning the horse.

X. That if his Lordship shall find the demands of Salamanca to be just, he shall write to the said judge to cause him to be paid.

XI. That his Lordship shall be discoursed concerning the captain's slaves.

XII. That forasmuch as the said Roldan and his company mistrust that his Lordship, or some other person by his order, may offer them some violence with the other ships that are in the island, he shall therefore grant them a pass or safe conduct, promising, in their Majesties' name and upon his own faith and the word of a gentleman, as is used in Spain, that neither his Lordship nor any other person shall offend them or obstruct their voyage.

Having examined this agreement made by Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal and James de Salamanca with Francis Roldan and his company, this day, being Wednesday, the 21st of November, 1498, I am content

it be fully observed, upon condition that the said Francis Roldan, nor any of his followers, in whose name he subscribed and ratified the articles by him delivered to the aforesaid Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal and James de Salamanca, shall not receive into their company any other Christian of the island, of any state or condition whatsoever.

I, Francis Roldan, judge, do promise and engage my faith and word, for myself and all those with me, that the articles above mentioned shall be observed and fulfilled, without any fraud, but faithfully as is here set down, his Lordship performing all that has been agreed on between Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal and James de Salamanca and myself, as is in the written articles.

I. That from the day of the date hereof till the answer be brought, for which ten days shall be allowed, I will admit no person whatsoever of those that are with the Lord Admiral.

II. That within fifty days after the said answer shall be delivered to me here in Fort Conception, signed and sealed by his Lordship, which shall be within the ten days before mentioned, we will embark and set sail for Spain.

III. That none of the slaves freely granted us shall be carried away by force.

IV. That whereas the Admiral will not be at the port where we are to embark, the person or persons his Lordship shall send thither be honored and respected as their Majesties' and his Lordship's officers, to whom shall be given an account of all we put aboard the ships, that they may enter it and do as his Lordship shall

think fit, as also to deliver to them such things as we have in our hands belonging to their Majesties. All the aforesaid articles are to be subscribed and performed by his Lordship, as Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal and James de Salamanca have them in writing, the answer whereof I expect to have at Fort Conception in eight days to come, and if it be not then brought I shall not be obliged to do anything herein mentioned.

In testimony whereof, and that I and my company may observe and perform what I have said, I have subscribed this writing. Given at Fort Conception on the 16th of November, 1498.

These were hard and humiliating terms, based on falsehood and injustice ; but so completely hemmed in and embarrassed by the worst possible combination of circumstances was Columbus that he had no choice, except the lesser of two evils, for defection was becoming more rife every day. Many of those who were still with him talked of going away to Ciguaya, after some such manner as Roldan and his men had gone into Zaragua. Therefore, on the 21st of November, he ratified the agreement between Roldan on the part of the rebels and Carvajal and Salamanca on his part.

The rebels then went away into Zaragua to prepare for their departure, and the Admiral at once set about getting the two ships ready for Spain, as agreed. To part thus with the ships in which he had planned to send his brother Bartholomew away for further discoveries in the regions of Paria and the pearl fisheries was a grievous disappointment ; but to get the trouble of this rebellion out of the land was the pressing necessity of the hour. How much more rapidly every

department of this great enterprise might then progress.

But he felt it his duty to advise the sovereigns of the fearful combination of things which made it necessary for him to sign an agreement so false and so unjust as that by which the rebellion had been compromised. A detailed account, therefore, of the whole matter was forwarded to Spain. He recommended that these parties be arrested, and when their outrageous conduct, which had paralyzed every industry in the island, broken up the system of tribute, and brought on war with the natives, whom they had robbed and whose women they had debauched, could be investigated, the sovereigns would know something of the terrible necessity under which he had been compelled to act in order to save the colony from utter ruin.

The trouble with the rebels being thus adjusted, and San Domingo and vicinity once more restored to tranquillity, the Admiral, accompanied by Don Bartholomew, went to Isabella to repair such mischief as had occurred in consequence of the revolt, the interests at San Domingo being left with Don Diego.

But such was the lack of the necessary resources and such the disorder in the colony that the ships agreed upon for Roldan could not be gotten ready till late in February. Then a severe storm overtook them on their way and compelled them to lie at anchor in a harbor on the coast till the end of March. Indeed, one was so disabled as to be obliged to return to San Domingo, another being dispatched under Carvajal to take its place.

This failure of the ships in respect to time the

rebels seized upon, glad for any excuse to escape such accountabilities to justice as they were liable to meet in Spain. Of course they laid all the blame on Columbus. He had intentionally delayed the ships, and then sent them in an unseaworthy condition, and short of provisions, in order that they might perish on the long voyage. Meanwhile the provisions which they had made for the voyage had been consumed by waiting, and could not readily be replaced. They therefore resolved not to go.

Carvajal then gave formal protest, in the presence of a notary, of their refusing to embark according to the spirit of their agreement. The ships, already badly eaten by the teredo worm, and with provisions wasted by unavoidable detention, were sent back to San Domingo, while Carvajal returned by land. Roldan went with him some distance on horseback, appearing much disturbed in mind. He dared not return to Spain, and to persist in defiance of authority with such a band of ruffians at his heels could not afford any very bright prospect. He wished to talk with Carvajal privately, so they two alighted and withdrew under a tree. Again he declared that he was loyal at heart, and if the Admiral would send a safe-conduct to him and his principal companions he would meet him, and thought that all might be arranged with satisfaction to both parties; but for the present the matter must be a secret as far as his men were concerned.

Carvajal was only too glad to report this to the Admiral, who at once forwarded the safe-conduct under the royal seal. He also sent a letter to Roldan,

“short” but “very pithy, persuading him to peace, submission, and their Majesties’ service.” This letter was written May 21st. “He afterwards repeated it at San Domingo more at large, on the 29th of June, and on the 3d of August six or seven of the chief men about the Admiral sent Roldan another safe-conduct, that he might come to treat with his lordship.”¹ He and his followers were pledged security, provided they did nothing hostile to the representatives of the royal authority.

But it is time for Columbus to get intelligence from Spain. Since he is struggling so faithfully, so loyally amidst the toils of a rebellion almost universal, and the most unreasonable and wicked, surely the sovereigns will stand by him promptly, positively. The letter he receives is from Bishop Fonseca. He acknowledges the appeal made by the Admiral, but in a few words, as freezingly cold as the icebergs of the north, he simply says the matter for the present must remain in suspense until the sovereigns may have time to investigate and devise some remedy—as if rebellion and disorder in a young colony were a thing to be winked at, and allowed plenty of time to grow and become strong.

This cruel answer almost took the heart out of Columbus. Must he, then, stand alone in this terrible crisis? How incorrigible would the rebels become when they discovered how little influence he had with the royal authority! Still, he would do and suffer everything in order to bring about a speedy reconciliation. In the latter part of August he and several

¹ Fernando Columbus, cap. 83.

of his most important men sailed in the two caravels to Azua, between San Domingo and Zaragua, in order to meet Roldan and his men as much to their convenience as possible.

Roldan, accompanied by Moxica and several others, came on board the ship with a boldness and effrontery which would have ill-become a conqueror even in dictating terms to the vanquished, not to speak of a culprit who should be humbling himself for pardon. Surely he must have heard how coolly the Admiral's appeal had been received in Spain. Except as circumstances had changed the propriety of certain clauses, he demanded the same terms as before, adding the following :

I. That the Admiral should send fifteen of his men to Spain in the first ships which might go.

II. That to those remaining he should give land and horses for their pay.

III. That proclamation should be made that all which had happened had been caused by false suggestions and through the fault of bad men.

IV. That the Admiral should newly appoint Roldan perpetual judge.¹

What terms could have been more humiliating or unjust than these? But to the unhappy Admiral there was left no choice between this miserable compromise or the ruin of the colony. Roldan went on shore to confer with the main body of his men. After some two days the capitulations of the rebels were forwarded in language the most arrogant and insulting. To all their former articles of concession from

¹ See Fernando Columbus.

Columbus they added that if he should fail in the fulfilment of any point, they might, by force or by any other means they saw fit, *compel him*.

Before signing these humiliating conditions he added that the commands of the sovereigns, himself, and the justices should be promptly obeyed by them. Whatever the injustice and the personal humiliation he might suffer in this transaction, there might come a time when he could explain to the royal ear how little personal freedom there had been left to him.

We have been somewhat full and explicit in giving the details of this shameful rebellion, that the reader may judge for himself as to the wretched material out of which Columbus was obliged to construct his colony. Let those who are disposed to judge him severely as a ruler contemplate what they could have done under like circumstances. Surely Don Bartholomew must have been a patient man to have allowed so much blame to be falsely imputed to him; for his management, during the absence of the Admiral, had been made the chief point of censure by the rebels.

Herrera represents Roldan as resuming his office of chief judge with a noticeable arrogance. Surrounded by his former accomplices, and holding intercourse only with the disaffected, he was disposed to frown upon those who had been orderly and loyal, even discharging Rodrigo Perez, the Admiral's lieutenant, and saying that only those whom he should appoint could hold office in the island. But Columbus was patient, and endured many indignities that quiet and order might be restored. When Roldan presented a paper, signed by over one hundred of his late followers,

asking for lands in Zaragua upon which they might settle, he feared the result of locating so many rebels at one point, and that so remote. He thought it better to distribute them, some at Bonaó, some on the banks of the Rio Verde, and others at St. Jago. The tracts of land he gave were large, and he also apportioned them as slaves many who had been taken in the wars. Caciques near by might also furnish labor by means of their subjects instead of paying tribute. This sort of quasi serfdom was the beginning of that distribution of free Indians for labor called *repartimientos*, and which was afterwards so greatly abused by the Spaniards in the New World. If, as Muñoz thinks, Columbus now concluded that, as a conqueror of this part of the world, he might dispose of the natives as vassals to his feudal lords, it was certainly very different to the kindly policy he had in mind on his first discovery. Stern necessity had changed his plans.

About this time he organized a sort of police to range the provinces, collect tribute, and keep an eye on the conduct of the colonists.

Roldan now presented his own claims, which included certain lands at Isabella, a royal poultry farm in the Vega, known as La Esperanza, certain grants in Zaragua, with cattle and animals in general. The cacique whose ears Ojeda had cut off when he first went into the Vega was to furnish his subjects as laborers on these lands. All these grants, however, were subject to the royal pleasure, for Columbus anticipated retribution for the leaders of the late rebellion when the sovereigns should come to know the facts.

Roldan gained permission to visit his possessions in

the Vega. At Bonaó, his late headquarters, he made Requelme, one of his old colleagues, a judge in that place. At this appointment Columbus was aggrieved, for it transcended the powers of Roldan's office. Then that strong edifice which Requelme was erecting on a hill, ostensibly a barn for cattle, looked exceedingly like a fortress, and might be used by the late rebels as a stronghold. Arana, in his firm loyalty, entered a protest against the building. Both parties appealed to the Admiral, and he forbade the enterprise.

Columbus had intended to go into Spain, taking Don Bartholomew with him, in order that they in person might accomplish that which his letters had failed to do. But the outlook was still forbidding. Could he be certain that the late rebellion was wholly subdued? What if the Ciguayans should swoop down from the mountains, as they seemed inclined, and try to carry off their imprisoned cacique, Maiobanex, now in Fort Conception? What could be the import of those four ships said to have recently arrived at the west end of the island? The Admiral was obliged to content himself with sending two caravels to Spain early in October. In these returned such of the colonists as did not wish to stay, including some of the late rebels. They took slaves with them and such daughters of the caciques as they could induce to go with them, which wrongs the Admiral, in the weakness of his authority, was obliged to wink at. He also knew but too well how these enemies would lose no opportunity to misrepresent and ruin him at the court. As an offset he sent the noble Ballester and Garcia Barrantes to represent him before the sover-

eigns and to present the depositions concerning the conduct of the late rebels, into the truth of which affair he urged them to make close inquiry, since he looked upon his capitulations with them as null and void, because they had been wrung from him in violence, and at sea, where he had no jurisdiction as viceroy ; because the insurgents had been condemned as traitors, and it was not in his power to absolve them ; because the capitulations included matters of the royal revenue, over which he had no control in the absence of the officers pertaining to it ; and, more especially, because these insurgents had violated the solemn oath they had taken when leaving Spain, that they would be loyal to him as the viceroy of the sovereigns. Again he asked for a judge competent to administer the laws, and a council of discreet persons, in order that he might not stand alone in the severe exigencies of justice. But their functions must be so limited as not to infringe on his rights and dignities. What could governors do if their princes did not sustain them ? And, since his health was failing and he was becoming conscious of the infirmities of age, might not his son Diego, now a page, but destined to be his successor and having arrived at mature years, be sent to assist him ?

CHAPTER XVIII.

OJEDA'S MISCHIEF AT ZARAGUA.



IT seems as if there were no limits to the evil in the hearts of those with whom Columbus was associated. Even the brave, dashing Ojeda is now in mischief. His four ships, already hinted at, were anchored at the west end of the island. As Roldan had now faced about and seemed anxious to reinstate himself, Columbus sent him, on the 29th of September, with two caravels, to inquire into the reason for their appearance. He anchored within two leagues of Ojeda's squadron, and landed with twenty-five men accustomed to find trails in the forest. Five were sent as scouts, who reported Ojeda away from his ships, and accompanied by only fifteen men. They were making cassava-bread. Roldan placed himself so as to intercept their return, or possibly take them by surprise. The Indians, who dreaded his very name on account of his former excesses among them, reported him. Ojeda saw his peril, and, as he could not return to his ships, faced Roldan with only a half-dozen men. The latter wished to know why the former had come to that lonely part of the island. Ojeda said he had been on a voyage of discovery, and had sought a harbor there because he was distressed for food and needed to repair his ships. In the name of the government, Roldan demanded a sight of the credentials under which he prosecuted

his discoveries. Knowing that Roldan was not to be trifled with, Ojeda said that his license was on board his ship, and that he would pay his respects to the Admiral at San Domingo, when he would impart to him intelligence which no one else might hear. Meanwhile he might say, in a whisper, that the Admiral was in complete disgrace at court, that there was even talk of taking away his command, and that the Queen, about his only remaining friend, was so ill that she was in nowise likely to recover.

When Roldan went on board Ojeda's ships he found persons of his former acquaintance, some of whom had before been in the island. They repeated the substance of Ojeda's statements, and there was indeed a license, signed by Bishop Fonseca, authorizing Ojeda's voyage of discovery. The whole scheme of the enterprise was soon revealed. The glowing report which Columbus had sent to Spain of the Paria region which he had just explored, the pearl fisheries, etc., had been made common property among a certain group of adventurers, thus giving them the advantage of the hard-earned discoveries of the Admiral. Their inordinate thirst for gain being aroused, Ojeda was put at the head of an exploring expedition, the worthy Bishop Fonseca giving him full access to all the charts, records, etc., which Columbus had sent home. Occasion was thus taken to intercept the great explorer in the harvest which he might have enjoyed but for the evil deeds of Roldan and his ruffians in Hispaniola. The papers which Fonseca had furnished Ojeda, and which were not signed by the sovereigns, forbade him going to any of the Portuguese regions,

or any part discovered by Columbus previous to 1495; but as the Paria coast and the Pearl Islands had been discovered after the above date, that great and wealthy region was purposely left open to this company of adventurers, who fitted out their own ships and controlled their fortunes, giving only a certain proportion to the crown.

The fleet had been fitted out at Seville, where many wealthy speculators assisted. Among those who sailed was the notable Americus Vespuccius, then a Florentine merchant in that city. In geography, navigation, and a ready use of the pen he was highly accomplished. Indeed, it was the happy use he made of his pen in describing his several voyages along the coast of South America, and his work as chief pilot of Spain and cartographer of the New World, which, all unwittingly on his own part, fastened his name¹ forever to one-half the globe. Here, too, was Juan de la Cosa, a mariner of rare skill, who had sailed with Columbus on his first voyage and in his trying explorations along the south side of Cuba. He was first pilot of Ojeda's fleet, and has made himself famous by means of his map of the New World, which he drew on a large ox-hide, and which, beautifully colored and illuminated, still adorns the walls of the Royal Museum in Madrid.

Having sailed in May, 1499, the adventurers had coasted the southern continent from two hundred leagues east of the Orinoco, and, following in the track of Columbus's third voyage by means of his charts, they had passed through the Serpent's Mouth

¹See Humboldt's *Examen Critique*.

and out at the Mouth of the Dragon, visited the pearl regions, and discovered the Gulf of Venezuela.¹ Touching at the Caribbee Islands, they had encountered the natives in one of their fierce attacks, and had captured many slaves for the markets of Spain. Their supplies running low, Ojeda² had sailed for Hispaniola, having made the most extensive voyage up to that time on the shores of the New World.

Roldan had gathered what information he could from Ojeda, and believing him sincere in his promise to sail to San Domingo and do homage to the Admiral, he returned to that place to make report. Columbus was deeply aggrieved to learn of so serious an infringement of his rights as the license for Ojeda's voyage implied, but he would wait patiently for the promised visit of that daring adventurer, and learn more fully what had been done. But Ojeda's promise had been made only as a means of escape from Roldan, and not with the least intention of fulfilment. Having repaired his squadron and gathered supplies, he sailed farther along the coast of Zaragua, where the Spaniards who resided in those parts, and who were not specially friendly to Columbus, received him most cordially and gave him whatever he needed. These sore-headed rebels, learning Ojeda's jealous feelings towards the Admiral, looked upon him as a new leader, who might take the place of Roldan. They

¹ It seems that Vespuccius was not with Ojeda in his questionable manœuvres at Hispaniola, but was still sailing westward along the coast of South America.

² Vespuccius does not seem to have accompanied Ojeda to Hayti, but returned home by another route.

were loud in their clamors against the government, especially on account of the back pay which they claimed. All this gave a vantage-ground to the hot-blooded Ojeda. He would now play the hero, and be the redresser of the grievances of these men, who had been driven to desperation by the cruelty of the Columbus brothers. He would march at their head and demand a redress of their wrongs, and the Admiral would have to pay them on the spot or leave the island.

These heroic propositions by Ojeda were received with the most enthusiastic cheers by some of the late rebels, but others were not disposed to fall in with his plans. Hence arose a violent quarrel, in which several were killed and others wounded on both sides. But those in favor of Ojeda's scheme prevailed. About this time Roldan arrived with a small company of resolute men. Intelligence of the proceedings of Ojeda in Zaragua had reached San Domingo, and he had been sent by the Admiral to keep a close watch of affairs. On the way he had enlisted his old accomplice, Escobar, who was to aid him with all the force he could collect. The late rebels in Zaragua, finding that Roldan had been hopelessly converted to the service of the government, undertook to waylay and kill him while on his march; but he was too wide-awake and quick to be thus entrapped.

Ojeda knew better than to encounter Roldan and his force in a desperate fight, and thus oppose himself to the royal authority with no adequate end in view, and therefore found his way back to his ships. Roldan now besought him to cease his irregularities,

which were creating so much disturbance, and come ashore to make peace. Ojeda would not venture within the reach of one so crafty and vehement as he knew Roldan to be. On the other hand, he seized several of his men and confined them in irons on board his vessel, threatening to hang them if Roldan did not hand over a certain one-armed sailor who had deserted.

After a good deal of close watching and sharp manœuvring on the part of both these shrewd opponents, Ojeda's ships moved away to the province of Cahay, and landing with forty men he took whatever he wanted by force from the kind-hearted natives. He was soon overtaken by Roldan and Escobar, who followed along the shore. In a canoe, which was made almost to skip over the water by the deft Indian paddles, the two latter approached the ships of Ojeda and asked of him that, since he himself dared not come ashore, he would send a boat and bring them on board one of his ships for a conference. Ojeda at once sent the boat, thinking to thus get Roldan in his power. The boat came near to the shore and asked Roldan to come to them.

"How many may come with me?" asked the latter.

"Not more than five or six," was the reply.

Escobar and four others waded to the boat, which refused to take any more; but Roldan, getting upon the back of one man and ordering another to walk alongside and assist him, eight in all got in. At once Roldan ordered the boat to row to shore. When the men refused, his men attacked them with the sword, and wounding some, made the rest prisoners.

One Indian, however, plunged under water and swam away.

Roldan had gained his point, for Ojeda must have his long-boat. Entering his small boat, which remained with his chief pilot and four oarsmen, the latter came near the shore. Roldan entered the long-boat just captured, with some twenty-two men, twenty more awaiting his orders on the land, and made ready to meet him. Keeping at a safe distance from each other, they exchanged some sharp words. Ojeda said that Roldan had come with men under arms in order to seize him, and therefore he had a right to defend himself. This the latter denied, and promised that all should be well if the former would present himself before the Admiral at San Domingo.

Finally there was an agreement. The boat was to be restored and the prisoners exchanged—all but the one-armed deserter, who had made his escape—if Ojeda would immediately leave. But when he sailed he threatened to come again with more men and more ships. For some time Roldan kept watch, lest Ojeda should not depart after all. Very soon he heard that he had landed farther along the coast and he immediately followed with eighty men in canoes, others acting as scouts along the land. But before he could overtake him, Ojeda had sailed again; only after he had made up a drove of slaves, however, to be sold on his arrival at Cadiz.

This visit of Ojeda at Hispaniola is a very naughty, ugly incident in the life of one who, though unfortunate in the end, might otherwise have passed into history as a brave and interesting character, who ren-

dered much good service in an important age of the world's history.

This successful attack on Ojeda by the late rebels was a grand first step toward their reinstatement in the public confidence. Being so unaccustomed to good deeds, they took great credit to themselves, made a loud noise over their loyalty and great services, and asked Roldan to give them land that they might make them estates in the delightful province of Cahay. But the late rebel leader wished to make good his professions of reform, and win a good name for obedience to authority, so he gave them some of his own lands in Zaragua to quiet them till he could confer with the Admiral as to their request. In answer to Roldan's letter, asking permission to come to San Domingo, Columbus expressed his most sincere thanks for that leader's faithfulness and success in driving away the enemy, but asked him to remain yet longer in Zaragua, lest Ojeda should still be lingering about the coast with view to further mischief.

As bad blood is sure to breed a sore somewhere, so the evil nature of some of the late rebels soon found occasion for another insurrection. This time they found their centre of interest in the romance of a love affair. There had recently come to the island a young cavalier of a distinguished family, named Don Hernando de Guevara. A cousin to Adrian de Moxica, he was as dissolute in habits as he was elegant and fascinating in manners, and had been so licentious at San Domingo that the Admiral ordered him to leave the island. Having reached Zaragua too late to take passage in Ojeda's ships, he found refuge with Roldan,

who was disposed to show him favor on account of his relationship to his old friend De Moxica. and so permitted the young cavalier to choose his place of residence until the Admiral should give further orders concerning him. That point in Cahay where Roldan had captured Ojeda's boat was chosen, as it was near to Zaragua, the home of those of his acquaintance and relationship. This was also a sort of sporting point, where de Moxica kept his hawks and hounds.

Through Roldan he was introduced to the famous Anacaona, with whose beautiful daughter, just passing into womanhood, he became desperately in love. Hence when the occasion for his departure arrived he was not inclined to go. Roldan, who Las Casas thinks was himself in love with the Indian beauty, became peremptory, and demanded that Guevara should leave. Anacaona, to whom the Spaniards were always objects of the strongest fascination, was pleased with the anticipated match, and encouraged the young cavalier to linger at her house. He, meanwhile, sent for a priest to baptize his intended bride. Roldan now sent for Guevara and rebuked him severely for taking advantage of the friendship and affection of this distinguished native family, and again he ordered him to depart. Guevara pleaded good intentions and begged leave to remain, but Roldan could not be persuaded, saying the Admiral might misunderstand the matter, and great evil come of it.

The young cavalier left, but three days was the longest separation from the Indian beauty which he could endure. Then he returned with five friends, and managed to be hid away in Anacaona's house. A

severe attack of inflamed eyes confining Roldan at the time, he sent word at once, on hearing of his young friend's return, ordering him to leave *instantly*. This time the young cavalier put on an air of defiance, and warned Roldan not to make foes in this critical hour, when he might need the aid of his friends, for the Admiral was certainly about to take off his head. Roldan now ordered him to appear at once before the Admiral at San Domingo. At this stern order the young lover wilted, and begged for permission to remain a little longer. Roldan granted the request.

But Guevara resolved to take revenge on the man who had dared to thwart his passion, and so began at once to make a party among the more incorrigible of Roldan's former accomplices, who, as Irving says, "detested as a magistrate the man they had idolized as a leader." By a sudden rise they would either put Roldan to death or put out his eyes. But he, discovering the plot, arrested Guevara and seven of his friends in Auacaona's house, and reported them to the Admiral, saying that he was not able to judge the case impartially. Columbus ordered the young cavalier to be confined in the fortress at San Domingo. Now the smouldering embers of the old rebellion were fanned into a flame. Adrian de Moxica, resolving to rescue his cousin, called on Requelme at Bonaó, and they together soon rallied their old comrades, settled in the neighborhood, in defence of their young favorite and his pretty bride *in prospectu*. Why should Roldan, now become tyrant, prevent such a happy marriage—one which might be a benefit to the colony? Down came the old weapons of rebellion from the walls,

and a body of reckless men on horseback were ready for any deeds of violence which might rescue their favorite, and secure the death of Roldan and the Admiral. The latter, now at Fort Conception and thus in the immediate vicinity of the plot, set out at night, with six servants and three esquires, for the quarters of the ringleaders, who, encouraged no doubt by the leniency shown to them in the recent insurrection, were completely off their guard. Moxica and several of his chief confederates were taken and lodged in Fort Conception. After all the outrages which Columbus had suffered from these turbulent men, and the utter inappreciation they had shown for his recent toleration, it is not at all surprising that he now determined upon heroic treatment. Moxica was to be hanged from the top of the fortress. As he wished to confess before dying, a priest was sent for; but though he had been so vaunting and arrogant as a rebel, he had no courage in the face of death. He would begin his confession and then hesitate, and then begin again, as if to gain time for some possible chance of rescue. Finally he began to accuse of criminality others who were above suspicion. Columbus, out of patience with such cowardly treachery, ordered the miserable wretch to be swung off.

This new departure was vigorously kept up. In prison irons several of Moxica's associates awaited the execution of their death sentence. Requelme and those quartered with him at Bonao were taken to San Domingo, where they made company for Guevara, the cause of the rebellion. The rest of the rebels fled to Zaragua. Don Bartholomew, aided by

Roldan, pursued them with his usual swiftness and energy. Very soon seventeen of these rebellious spirits awaited their trial in one dungeon, and still the chase continued. If these measures seem severe, let it be remembered how every enterprise of this great work of colonizing and developing the New World had been utterly paralyzed by the despicable conduct of these miserable, seditious spirits, and that the kindest and most patient and forbearing measures on the part of Columbus were of no avail.

Good order was once more restored. Even the irritated Indians took warning, and submitted to authority. Some of them became sufficiently civilized to put on clothes and to adopt Christianity. They assisted the indolent Spaniards in cultivating the lands, and a settled prosperity began to appear. Had the Admiral and Viceroy now been allowed to pursue his plans without interruption, no doubt a new era of good government and general improvement might have ensued. But there was to be no opportunity for this scientific discoverer to reap the harvest which he had so truly earned. Those plans which were to eventuate in his utter disgrace and overthrow as a ruler were already maturing.

CHAPTER XIX.

BOBADILLA SENDS COLUMBUS HOME IN CHAINS.

HOW bitterly cruel that, while Columbus was patiently contending with such idleness, licentiousness, cruelty, and seditiousness as broke up every line of his operations in the New World, this wicked element should have had its correlated forces working with most fatal effect in the court of Spain, thus completely demoralizing the confidence he had inspired and subverting his entire system of colonization. Very reluctantly, indeed, especially in the case of Isabella, did the royal confidence give way. But the continual dropping of water even will finally wear away the rock.

And still the cry against the Admiral and his brothers continued. All the ship-news from the Indies—and it was important in those days—reiterated the same thing. The disappointed speculator, the humiliated hidalgo, the expelled criminal—all told the oft-repeated items. Letters from those who could not return confirmed them. The points of accusation are clearly expressed by the Admiral's son, who was then a page in the royal household, and whose wounded feelings would but too clearly receive the indelible impressions of the hour, which he so candidly related in after years. He says, "Many of the rebels by letters from Hispaniola, and others that were returned into Spain, did not cease to give in false information to the King and his council against the Ad-

miral and his brothers, saying they were cruel and unfit for that government, not only because they were strangers and aliens, but because they had not formerly been in a situation to learn by experience how to govern people of quality, affirming that if their highnesses did not apply some remedy those countries would be utterly destroyed, and if they were not quite ruined by their ill-government the Admiral would revolt and join in league with some prince to support him, since he pretended that all was his own, for it had been discovered by his industry and labor, and that the better to compass his design he concealed the wealth of the country and would not have the Indians serve the Christians, nor be converted to the faith, because by making much of them he hoped they would be on his side and do what he might wish against their highnesses."

Here we may see how many-sided and dishonest was this bitter attack upon Columbus. A little while before his enemies were making a special point on what they regarded as his cruelty to the natives. Now they make an equally sharp and much more dangerous point, by claiming that by indulgence and caressing of this simple-hearted people he is courting their alliance in an anticipated revolt against the sovereigns of Spain.

And the grave charge of a design on the part of Columbus to alienate the Indies from the authority of Spain, however preposterous, *must have been made very prominent*, for in his letter to the nurse of Prince Juan he refers to it in the most affecting and pathetic language. "Although I am an ignorant man," said he, "I do not imagine that any one supposed me so stupid as not to be aware that even if the Indies had belonged to

me I could not support myself without the assistance of some prince. Since it is thus, where should I find better support or more security against expulsion than in the King and Queen, our sovereigns, who from nothing have raised me to so great an elevation, and who are the greatest princes of the world, on the land and on the sea?" Then referring to the fact that his son was in the household of the sovereigns, thus binding his own heart in loyalty to them, which loyalty they had appreciated, as shown in the honors they had bestowed upon him, he continues: "If I have now spoken severely of a malicious slander, it is against my will, for it is a subject I could not willingly rrecall even in my dreams."

The cry of the Admiral's enemies had all along been that there was no gold in this pretended Ophir of Solomon. Noblemen, mariners, gentlemen, and common people made a jest of his great expectations. Now, since gold was unquestionably being found in abundance, they began to turn the tide of scandal in another direction. Not only did laborers complain, because they must work for wages instead of the more profitable arrangement of shares, but "there were those," says Bernaldez, "who wrote, and who came home and told the King and Queen, that he was embezzling the gold, and that he wished to give it to the Genoese, and many other stories, charging him with crimes, the least of which it ought not to have been believed that he would commit." Gold had but recently been found in considerable quantities; and the Admiral had been accumulating it both in amount and in masses, with feelings of gratification and even vanity. If, as Bernaldez says, "he delayed sending

the gold to the King somewhat longer than he should have done," it was only that he might himself bring to the sovereigns his specimens, "as large as the eggs of a goose or fowl, and many other sizes, which had been collected in a short space of time, in order to please their Highnesses, and that they might be impressed with the importance of the affair when they saw a great number of large stones loaded with gold."¹ Then he would report to them "a revenue for twenty years, which is, according to man's calculation, an age," and show them how in the Indies "they gather gold in such abundance that there are people who, in four hours, have found the equivalent of five marks."

The charge of arrears on the part of Columbus toward those serving the sovereigns under him was pressed even to a most disgraceful issue. Says Fernando Columbus, "When I was at Granada, at the time the most serene Prince Michael happened to die, above fifty of them, like shameless wretches, brought a load of grapes, and sat down in the court of the Alhambra (a castle and palace), crying out that their Highnesses and the Admiral made them live so miserably by not paying them, with many other scandalous expressions. And their impudence was so great that if the Catholic King went abroad they all got about him,² crying, '*Pay, pay.*' And if it happened that my brother or I, who were pages to her Majesty, passed by where they were, they cried out in a hideous manner, making the sign of the cross, and saying, 'There are the Admiral

¹ Letter of Columbus to the nurse of Prince Juan.

² Caught hold of his robe, some say.

of the mosquito's sons, he that has found out false and deceitful countries, to be the ruin and burial-place of the Spanish gentry,' adding many more such insolencies, which made us cautious of appearing before them."¹

It is true, that against all this tide of slander there was an occasional letter from Columbus stating the facts of his trying situation, and showing that the troubles of the island did not arise from errors on his part, but out of the nature of the undertaking and the great depravity of the men about him. But the wily and bitter-spirited Fonseca controlled all communications, and could put them into such relations before the court as suited his enmity towards the Admiral. Then there remained the stubborn and unfortunate fact that, while the draught upon the royal treasury to support the enterprise in the Indies was immense, the fleets had returned almost empty, bringing only slaves and golden promises.

It is easy to see how the jealous mind of Ferdinand, always open to suspicion in respect to this enterprise, begun, as it were, under his protest, and constantly caviled at by the courtiers, who felt themselves outshone by this sudden glory of a foreigner, should now give way to the general sentiment of contempt for the Admiral. Even Isabella, so ardent in her admiration of the noble achievements of her hero of the ocean seas, must needs yield to some extent to the incessant clamor of all parties. If the knocking down and kicking of Breviesca at Cadiz had shaken her faith in his humane spirit as a ruler, she was still more deeply wounded by the ship-loads of enslaved Indians

¹ Life of Colon by his son, cap. 85.

he continued to send to Spain, notwithstanding her protestation in favor of these innocent, kind-hearted people, whom she believed to be providentially under her special protection, and for whom she felt a particular responsibility.

Thus even Isabella began to conclude, along with the King and the court, that the time was come when some competent person should be sent to the Indies to make thorough investigation of affairs—Roldan's rebellion, the condition and treatment of the natives, the management of the mines, and particularly the spirit and methods of government by Columbus and his brothers. Who might be the person to undertake a commission so difficult, so delicate, so important? Who but Don Francisco Bobadilla, of the King's household, and commander of the knights—military and religious—of Calatrava? His first letter of authority, dated March 21st, 1499, after referring at length to the difficulties in Hispaniola, reads: "We command you to inform yourself of what has been done, to ascertain who they were that revolted against the Admiral, and for what cause they did so, what robberies and other crimes they have committed, and furthermore you will extend your inquiries to everything relating to these matters; when the investigation is finished and the truth known, you will arrest those who were guilty, whoever they may be, and sequester their property; you will proceed against them, whether present or absent, both civilly and criminally, and impose on them such fines and punishments as you may judge suitable."

All this seems proper enough, and if Bobadilla

needed help in his difficult work it was but reasonable, as the sovereigns further demanded, that he should be able to call the Admiral and all other persons in authority to his assistance.¹

If the sovereigns could have known precisely how matters in Hispaniola at that very time were coming into a state of submission to the Admiral—the natives overawed and the rebels subdued—why would it not have been well if they had come to his aid and sustained him through the crisis? In view of his great services, good motives, and peculiarly bitter trials, it would seem that such a course would merely have been the part of justice as well as discretion. We cannot but feel the force of Columbus's words in his letter to Prince Juan's nurse: "If their Highnesses would condescend to silence the popular rumors, which have gained credence among those who know what fatigues I have sustained, it would be a real charity;² for calumny has done me more injury than the services which I have rendered to their Highnesses and the care with which I have preserved their property and their government have done me good; and by their doing so I should be established in reputation and spoken of throughout the universe, *for the things which I have accomplished are such that they must gain, day by day, in the estimation of mankind.*"

Without doubt, the best way of sustaining Columbus would have been to appoint a competent commission of inquiry. Thus far the sovereigns had taken a step in the right direction; but unfortunately, as they

¹ See Navarrete, Col. Doc. Dipl., cxxvii.

² Instead of "*charity*," we would say "*justice*."

afterward discovered, the man chosen for the great mission to which the whole world would ever afterwards look with the utmost interest proved himself, alike in heart and in judgment, wholly inadequate to the undertaking.

As to the status of Columbus as a man and a ruler, seen in the midst of this fearful turmoil and commotion, *the writers who knew him*, whether they were, like Peter Martyr, at the court, or, like Las Casas, in the Indies, with one voice, sustain him not only as a man of sound policy and Christian motives *according to the conceptions of the time*, but as intensely loyal at heart and efficient in his methods. The generations which followed fell into line with their views. Even Navarrete, in his exhaustive collection of documents and profoundly critical spirit, did not influence Irving, who may be called his disciple in matters of the Columbian age, to be anything less than "an amiable hero-worshipper." The critical skill and fine impartial judgment of Humboldt placed him in the same category. But in our time not a few American writers, in the newspaper, the magazine, and the most critical bibliography, have arrogated to themselves the discovery that the sad fate of Hispaniola and the natives of the West India Islands generally was simply the consequence of the bad government of the Admiral and Viceroy. By this simple cutting of the Gordian knot they attempt to reverse the judgment of four centuries.

But a careful examination of the ways and means of Columbus, at this distance, at least, fails to find the items of bad rulership. His plans and counsels for La

Navidad would all have been the very best assurance of success if they had not been subverted by the heinous conduct of the garrison. His plans and methods of colonization were sound and practicable as far as can now be learned; and if he came into disfavor with the hidalgos, ecclesiastics, speculators, and laborers of his time, it would seem to have been because his conceptions of industry, frugality, and self-denial were too far in advance of the idleness, pride, and profligacy of those about him. The Spaniards hated him for very much the same reason that the Jamestown colony detested John Smith. They would rather beg corn of Powhatan than blister their hands in growing it. Surely the government of Columbus does not suffer when compared with that of Bobadilla and Ovando.

It will probably be some time before the world will withhold its sympathy and admiration from one having rendered the service of Columbus to the present age, as well as for the strictly scientific method, not to speak of the courage and energy, in which and by which the grand result was achieved.

As we have seen, the commission given by the sovereigns to Bobadilla in March was fair enough. Indeed, it was not only necessary, but every way in accordance with Columbus's own request; for he always courted investigation of the troubles in the Indies by some proper royal representative, and now he was emphasizing the request in respect to the conduct of Roldan and his confederates. He wished the sovereigns to send out some thoroughly learned and competent justice, who might judge these and all other cases impartially.

But on May 21st, scarcely two months later, other

letters were added to the commission, giving wholly a new scope to the functions of Bobadilla, and placing Columbus entirely at his mercy. Nothing new had occurred. No new intelligence had arrived. What, then, is the explanation of this change in the powers of the commissioner? Evidently the cabal of the Admiral's deadly enemies at court had been busy. To *merely investigate* was not enough in a case so desperate and so far away. There was no time to lose. If Bobadilla should find it necessary, after full investigation, to suspend the rule of the Admiral and his brothers, it would be perilous to put off that act until another commission could be sent out only after this one had returned. Why not give the present commissioner a discretionary power, to be used in case of necessity? To bring the generous and confiding heart of the Queen to this extreme measure probably required time. She appreciated the services of Columbus, which, if gold and costly gems, pearls and silken fabrics were not forthcoming as might have been expected from India, had at least added unprecedented lustre to the Spanish crown. If he had erred in some things, perchance for want of experience or because he did like others, as in the case of enslaving the natives, he was evidently loyal and conscientious. Would any one else do better under such trying circumstances? But even Isabella was won over after a time, and consented to the enlarged powers of the commission.

“To the counsellors, judges, magistrates, cavaliers, gentlemen, officers, and inhabitants of the colony,”—so ran the address of one of the royal letters of May 21st which announced Bobadilla as governor-general

of the Indies, with civil and criminal jurisdiction, and then continued—"We order and command all cavaliers and other persons now on these islands or arriving hereafter to quit them if the said commander, Francisco Bobadilla, judge it necessary for our service, and not to return thither, but to repair immediately to us. For this purpose, by our present letters, we confer on him all necessary powers, and order every one to obey his orders at once without waiting to consult us or to get further instructions, and without appeal, under such penalties as he may impose in our name,"¹ etc., etc.

The other letter, designating Columbus simply as the Admiral of the ocean, orders him and his brothers to surrender every royal possession and appurtenance of the island to the new governor, under the penalties appointed for those refusing to obey such orders given by the King. Five days later the sovereigns addressed a letter directly to the Admiral, ordering him to believe and obey whatever Bobadilla might demand, and to make his power as unlimited as possible the monarchs signed blanks which he might fill out and use at his discretion. We shall hereafter see that he used them in the most unwarrantable manner.

These letters conceded everything for the ruin of Columbus which his bitterest enemies might demand. Now it simply remained to so instruct and influence Bobadilla—himself, perhaps, a member of the vindictive cabal at court—to precipitate matters without due investigation; in other words, to prejudge the case; then the guilty culprits, who might well dread the results of

¹ Navarrete Col. Doc. Dipl., cxxviii.

a thorough and impartial inquiry, would at once escape justice and secure their victim.

Still the commission was delayed. But in the following autumn the ships arrived with the returned rebels, bringing the slaves which the straitened circumstances had compelled Columbus to allow the haughty insurgents, as well as those they had carried away by force after they left him. Among these were decoyed daughters of the caciques, some of whom were about to become mothers, and others had infants in their arms. The motherly heart of the Queen rose in indignation, for was not every one of these unhappy slaves handed over by the Admiral? So it was falsely claimed, and so she no doubt believed. This, then, was the drop which caused the cup to overflow. Las Casas says that the Queen was so incensed at the sight of these slaves that had it not been for her high sense of the eminent service of Columbus she would at once have brought him into disgrace. "What right has the Admiral to give away my subjects?" she exclaimed, and at once ordered them sent back, allowing those of the former shipments to remain only because they had been taken as lawful captives in war. Then had not the Admiral just asked to have the lease for enslaving the Indians continued a while longer? And all this after her repeated protestations!

Near the middle of July, 1500, Bobadilla left Spain for San Domingo. His two caravels bore twenty-five soldiers enlisted for a year, and six friars to take charge of the returning slaves and to evangelize the natives. At daybreak of August 23rd these caravels appeared just outside San Domingo, tacking as they awaited the

breeze from off the sea to bring them into the harbor. The Admiral, that he might restore peace and order as completely as possible, was at Fort Conception in the midst of the thickest population and near the place where the last move of the rebels had been made. The adelantado and Roldan were in Zaragua for the same purpose. Don Diego was therefore in command at San Domingo. He supposed these white sails, seen in the horizon from the fortress, were bringing victuals and ammunition from Spain, and as the Admiral had asked the sovereigns to send out his son Diego, might he not also be on board? At once a boat was sent out to make inquiries. Bobadilla appeared in person on his ship to announce himself a commissioner sent out by the King to investigate the affairs of the late revolt, and to say that Diego was not on board. He then asked the news and learned of Moxico's sequel to the rebellion of Roldan—his punishment, and that of his accomplices—seven rebels hanged in one week. He also ascertained how Requelme and Guevara, now in prison, awaited their execution. In short, he got an epitome of the news in general. At no time in the history of the rule of Columbus could one have found in the Indies a state of things more calculated to confirm prejudice as to the cruelty so long alleged against him. Behold those Spaniards dangling on gibbets, one on either side of the harbor—the ghastly faces familiar, possibly, to him or to some of his men! Was not all this quite enough to move the blood of a man capable of seeing but one side of a case, and that side already pretty clear to him before he left Spain?

The little town of San Domingo was all alive to the

new-comers. A commissioner to investigate the affairs of the island! Knots gathered here and there to discuss the matter. The guilty were in fear and trembling. Those who had suffered wrong, those who thought they had suffered wrong—especially those suffering from lack of pay—all were in high glee, for was not here “a Daniel come to judgment”? A whole fleet of boats hurried out to meet the caravel bearing this important personage, to whom every one wished to do homage. Throughout the day Bobadilla remained on board his ship, listening to the reports and the gossip of those who gathered about him. Of course, those whose guilt was the greatest, and who were therefore the most anxious for the ruin of the Admiral, had most to say, and by the time he was ready to go ashore he was also about ready to conclude the case.

That all things might be done decently and in order, he went straight to church with his followers on landing the next morning and heard mass. The Admiral's brother, Don Diego, and many prominent persons in the colony were present. When they went out of the church door after mass a great crowd had gathered in front. A crier read Bobadilla's letter of March 21st in a loud voice. This was the letter which requested him to make strict inquiry into the late rebellion, and to arrest and punish the guilty according to the full rigor of the law. The letter being read, he ordered Don Diego and the justices to deliver over to him Requelme, Guevara, and all the other prisoners, with the evidences against them. Their accusers, and those who had arrested them, must also appear. Don Diego replied that he was acting under the Admiral, whose powers

were greater than those of Bobadilla. If the latter would give him a copy of the royal letter, he would forward it to his brother, who alone could answer to this demand. He had no discretionary power in the matter. Bobadilla, with great disdain, refused to give a copy of the letter to *one who could do nothing*, and closed with a violent threat. If he had no authority as a commissioner, he might have as governor. They should soon learn that he had a right to command them all, the Admiral not excepted.

Appearing at the church again the next morning, he had concluded to assume *at a bound* that high authority which had been implied in his commission only as a last resort—in case of the Admiral's extreme culpability, as established after the fullest and most careful investigation. The crowd at the door was larger than on the day before, and they were all a-tiptoe to catch the final word from the new magistrate. On coming out from mass, in the presence of Don Diego and the notables of the town, the notary read Bobadilla's letters of the advanced commission, given May 21st, which appointed him governor-general of the Indies. He then took the accustomed oath of office, and, thus invested with the highest authority, again demanded the prisoners in the fort. The answer given was the same as before.

This aroused Bobadilla's wrath, especially since he saw that Don Diego's firmness had its effect on the people. He then produced the royal order commanding the Admiral and those under him to surrender the forts, vessels, and all else pertaining to their Majesties' service; and that there might be nothing lacking to in-

fluence the people he also read the order of May 30th, charging him to pay all arrears to those in the royal service, and to compel the Admiral to square his own personal accounts.

This last point carried the day, for in consequence of the low estate of the treasury there was a long column of arrears due many of those present. There were loud shouts of applause. With this demonstration of the popular favor, Bobadilla again demanded the surrender of the prisoners, and again was refused as before. Appealing to the loyalty of the crowd for old Castile and their sympathy for the suffering prisoners, he made his way to the fort to take it by force; and, either from curiosity or a disposition to aid, he was followed by all. The fort was in the command of Miguel Diaz, the same notable person who, having fled from the adelantado in danger and disgrace, had won the heart of the female cacique and reported the gold-mines of Hayna. He stood on the top of the wall of the closed and empty fort, with but a single companion at his side; and when the call came for him to surrender he took the same ground of refusal as Don Diego had done. The parley was of some length, Diaz protesting that he held the fort under the high authority of the Admiral, who had gained that country at the cost of sweat, toil, and danger; while Bobadilla reiterated his authority and showed the royal seals. Now the scene is enough to make one laugh, for Bobadilla and his crowd, with every kind of a weapon, even to picks and spades, storm and shiver the frail doors, designed only to keep out naked savages, with as fearful an energy as if they had been attacking huge gates of brass enclosing a garrison of thousands.

For might not these prisoners, condemned to die, be executed any moment? They were brought out in their chains and, having been asked a few questions, were turned over to an officer named Espinosa.

Bobadilla now took possession of the Admiral's house, appropriating his wares, furniture, plate, gold—in fact, everything, even to his most secret papers. Those who crowded around him, claiming arrears, he paid out of the money he found; for it is easy to pay debts with other people's money, especially when we can thereby gain an immense popularity. The next great step to the popular favor was a proclamation of liberty for every one to gather what gold he could for the next twenty years, paying only *an eleventh part* to the crown instead of *a third*. Now there would be a stampede to the mines, and it would not be long before every one would be rich!

Rumor of what was going on soon reached Columbus at Conception. He could not believe that any such transactions were authorized by the crown. Surely these were the acts of some private adventurer like Ojeda. But for a stranger to proclaim himself governor of the island, to take forcible possession of the forts, the prisoners, and his own house, and threaten to send him to Spain in irons—all this was too astounding to take place as a mere private adventure. He would at least go to Bonao and so be a little nearer to this confusion. Here an officer brought him a copy of Bobadilla's letters of authority. The last letter, however, commanding the acquiescence of Columbus, was kept back. Was the new official beginning to discover the rashness of his procedure?

To prevent this sudden overthrow of things, and secure a chance for reflection, Columbus sought to gain time by writing a sort of temporizing letter to Bobadilla, saying he would soon leave for Spain, and he would then pass everything over into his hands. He wrote also in some similar way to the Franciscans who had just come over, and with whom he regarded himself as more or less affiliated. But neither party made any reply.

Bobadilla, instead of putting the late rebels on trial as the first duty implied in his commission, was using the blanks over the royal seal in gathering their testimony against Columbus. The latter was about to announce his perpetual prerogatives, as those which could not be revoked, when he received the final letter from the sovereigns, commanding his submission, along with Bobadilla's orders to appear before him at once. Now his duty was plain. He at once set out, almost unattended, for San Domingo.

He found his brother Diego already in chains on one of the caravels, and Bobadilla was bustling about, beating up an armed force, which he supposed would be necessary in order to compel the Admiral to come to terms. But the latter came as quietly "as a lamb to the slaughter;" whereupon Bobadilla, without a word of explanation, put him in irons and thrust him as a prisoner into the grim old fort, which still frowns out upon the river, and from which men still watch the approaching ships as Don Diego did the sails of Bobadilla. Las Casas says, "He was an impudent and shameless cook that riveted the irons on his master's feet with the same alacrity and readiness as

though he were serving him some savory dish. I knew the wretch, and think his name was Espinoza."

But Bobadilla was ill at ease so long as the brave adelantado was abroad with an armed force, so he demanded the Admiral to advise him by letter to come in and surrender. In compliance with this request, Don Bartholomew was urged to submit quietly to the authority of the sovereigns, assuring him that their best hope of a just hearing would be in Spain. The advice was taken, and the brave adelantado, who had so often risked his life in the interests of the colony, was at once loaded with irons, and confined in a caravel apart by himself. Thus the three brothers were kept entirely separate, and not only would Bobadilla not so much as see them or in any way communicate with them, but all others were forbidden to do so under the severest penalties.

Having thus placed the three outraged brothers beyond the possibility of making any self-defence, he set himself to work to accumulate evidences against them. Instead of investigating the late rebellions and the heinous conduct of the many who had necessitated severe punishments, he evidently had no sense of duty, except to convict and displace the viceroy. To this end he called in as witnesses the late rebels—in fact, all malcontents and mutineers, even to the lowest rabble of the island. Instead of these wicked men being made to feel the sting of their own guilt, which had caused the disorders and miseries of the community, the way was made as easy and as inviting as possible for them to be the accusers and defamers of the man they had so shamefully injured. The conse-

quences of their own covetous rapines, their horrid licentiousness, and their cruel oppressions of the helpless natives were all laid to the charge of the Admiral and his brothers. From the old primal complaint—how this upstart foreigner had compelled the hidalgos of Spain to soil and blister their hands in menial toil—to the latest slander—how he was trying to incite the natives to aid him in revolting against the authority of Spain—at which last charge Mr. Fiske aptly says, “Satan from the depths of his bottomless pit must have grimly smiled”—all was relashed and served up anew, without a dissenting voice to oppose their exaggerations and falsehoods. “But calumny,” says Tarducci, “reached the extreme of impudence when he was charged with hindering the natives’ conversion. This accusation enables us to measure the audacity and baseness with which not only the acts but even the *motives* of Columbus were shamelessly distorted, falsified, and presented in the most odious and guilty aspect. The truth was that some savages of mature age had shown a wish to become Christians, and the missionaries, with ill-advised zeal, were disposed to satisfy their wishes at once; but the Admiral, wisely judging that it was an abuse of the sacrament to bestow it blindly on the first-comer, had ordered their baptism deferred until they were instructed at least in the fundamental truths of Christianity. For the rest, in order to judge of the value of all that mass of calumnies and accusations, it is enough to consider what was imputed to him in regard to the Indians. Some said he favored and caressed them in order to use them at the proper time against the government;

others that he intentionally persecuted them by tyranny and bloody wars, in order to have a pretext for stripping them of everything they owned and selling them as slaves to get money."

Bobadilla admitted "the rebels, his enemies, as witnesses," says Fernando Columbus, "and publicly favored all that came to speak ill of them (the Admiral and his brothers), who in their depositions gave in such villainies and incoherences that he must have been blind who did not plainly perceive that they were false and malicious."¹ "In short," adds Mr. Fiske, "from the day of his landing Bobadilla made common cause with the insurgent rabble, and when they had furnished him with a ream or so of charges against the Admiral and his brothers it seemed safe to send these gentlemen to Spain."

Columbus, in his close confinement, was left to conjecture the causes of his arrest. No charges had been preferred, no explanations given. He was spared the humiliation of seeing the "many scandalous libels set up at corners of streets against" him, but he could hear the hoots and jeers of the rabble outside and the "blowing of horns about the port." But, in the midst of all this shameless persecution, where is the governor, sent out to put down insurrection and rebellion? Does he notice James Ortez, governor of the hospital, as he reads his horrid libel publicly in the market-place? Certainly; but instead of the word of rebuke, he has a look of complacency. Aye, here in the cheerless prison sits the indefatigable discoverer of the New World, loaded with iron, stripped even of his necessary cloth-

¹ Fernando Columbus, cap. 86.

ing, without indictment or trial, while the most lusty rebels and the vilest criminals are not only acquitted without the semblance of a trial, but are exalted in the public favor as those who dared to resist tyranny and misrule.

No doubt Bobadilla designed to be very discreet in his choice of the man who was to take the noted prisoners to Spain. Here was Alonzo de Villego, who had just come out with him. This noble youth was a nephew of Cervantes, Fonseca's friend, and a protégé of the bishop's own household. He would safely deliver the Genoese tyrants in chains, either to Fonseca or to his uncle. But Villego was too just and magnanimous to be measured by the ugly narrowness and cruelty of Bobadilla, or to be influenced by the bitter enmity of Fonseca. "Alonzo de Villego was an hidalgo of noble character, and my particular friend," says Las Casas.

"Villego, whither are you taking me?" inquired Columbus, startled from his sad prison reverie.

"To the ship, my lord, on which we are to embark," was the reply, in tones of respect and cordiality.

"To embark, Villego? Is what you tell me the real truth?" cried the Admiral, in a tone of surprise; for he was expecting to be led to the scaffold.

"On my honor, my lord, it is the truth."

The Admiral's deep, expressive eye kindled with joy, for he seemed to be stepping out of an ignominious grave into the free light of life. The good Las Casas gives us this affecting bit of colloquy, which he, no doubt, received from the lips of Villego.

Early in October the caravels left the harbor, bearing, along with the criminals, an immense bundle of accu-

sations in the form of legal documents and private letters, the latter being sent by many of the colonists in approving attestation of the proceedings of Bobadilla. They were barely out at sea, however, when Villego, and Andrez Martin, the master of the ship, approaching the Admiral with profound respect, offered to remove his chains. "No," was his reply; "I appreciate your good-will, but cannot accede to your proposal. Their Majesties wrote to me to submit to everything Bobadilla might command in their name. It was in their name he loaded me with these chains, and I will carry them till the King and Queen order them taken off. In the future I will keep them as a token of the recompense bestowed on my services."¹

"Ever afterwards I used to see them in his chamber,"² says Fernando, "and when he was about to die he wished them to be buried with him."

The weather was fair and the wind favorable, and in a little more than a month the prisoners were in Spain, having received the most kindly attention from the gentlemen in charge. When the tall, stately figure of the gray-haired man, reminding one of the descriptions of the senators of ancient Rome, appeared in Spain, loaded down with the prison chains of the vilest criminal, the reaction of public sentiment was immense, and the outburst of indignation was so great that the sovereign soon found it necessary to disclaim all responsibility in so palpable an outrage. Whatever the mistakes of Columbus might have been, to send him home from the New World he had discovered through so

¹ Las Casas, *Hist. Ind.*, lib. 1, cap. clxxx.

² Fernando Columbus, cap. lxxxvi.

much risk, hardship, and peril, loaded down in irons, was infinitely too much for common sense and common sympathy. Bobadilla, representing Fonseca and the rest of the Admiral's enemies, had shot beyond his mark.

In his complete humiliation, Columbus did not venture to address the sovereigns, but his deeply affecting letter to the nurse of Prince Juan—the intimate friend of the Queen—would be sufficiently direct. Its burning appeals, so deeply founded in the facts of the case, were enough to bring up the blush from the coldest heart. No one can read this letter without the profoundest feelings of compassion; and if the narrative is sometimes incoherent, as being the utterances of a heart thrown into a tempest of emotion rather than the studied statements of cool reason, they are only the more affecting. In advance of all other communications, this letter was sent secretly by express to the court. The images in the picture might be somewhat broken, but on the whole it was a faithful mirror of the panorama of the late outrage and persecution. Isabella was wellnigh heart-broken. Even the cool, calculating Ferdinand was intensely moved. Most emphatically disavowing the rash and cruel proceedings of Bobadilla, and announcing that he had gone contrary to their instructions, they did not even wait for his files of accusation, but immediately ordered the prisoners' chains stricken off and that they should be treated with the utmost respect. A very cordial letter was then written to Columbus, expressing their unqualified displeasure at the indignities and sufferings he had endured, and inviting him to appear at court. This invitation was

backed up by 2,000 ducats, to enable him to come into their presence in a style becoming his rank.

“He came thither on the 17th of December,” says Herrera. This meeting of the aggrieved and outraged Admiral with the sovereigns is one of the most affecting scenes in history. He knelt in their presence, his venerable, manly form shaken with the grief due to the great wrongs which he had received in return for his incalculable services. The King was moved; Isabella was in tears. The Admiral wept and sobbed like a heart-broken child, “not being able to utter a word,” says Herrera, “for the greatness of the concern he had upon him. They bade him rise, and then he made a lamentable speech, protesting that it had always been his intention and desire to serve them with the utmost fidelity; and that if he had been guilty of any mistakes, they had been occasioned through want of knowing better, having always believed that what he did was for the best.”

This was a scene over which a court might well weep. So great a wrong to so great a benefactor finds no parallel in history.

For the sovereigns the situation was exceedingly embarrassing. How should they free themselves from accountability in an act so outrageous as this of Bobadilla, their commissioner? How might they conciliate the common indignation? How far they were responsible the world may never know. Common sense will always justify the words of Columbus: “I have been wounded extremely by the thought that a man should have been sent out to make inquiry into my conduct who knew that if he sent home a very aggravated

account of the result of his investigation he would remain at the head of the government." Too much power this, altogether, for one man, especially such a man as Bobadilla. "While Fonseca had some of the wisdom along with the venom of the serpent," says Mr. Fiske, "Bobadilla was simply a jackass, and behaved so that in common decency the sovereigns were obliged to disown him. They took no formal or public notice of his written charges against the Admiral, and they assured the latter that he should be reimbursed for his losses and restored to his viceroyalty and other dignities."

This promise, however, could not be fulfilled at present. The rage of the Castilians in Hispaniola against the Admiral, if wellnigh subdued by his triumphs alike over them and the natives just before the arrival of Bobadilla, had been so encouraged and stimulated by the indiscretions of that official that the immediate return of the viceroy was out of the question.

"When the two caravels that carried away the Admiral and his brothers from Hispaniola were gone," says Herrera, "Francis de Bobadilla, the new governor, made it his whole study to please the Spaniards, who were about three hundred, the Admiral having informed their Majesties that it was a sufficient number to keep the island in subjection, especially since they had taught the dogs to bite, for one single Spaniard went about as safe with a dog as if he had been guarded by a hundred men. Bobadilla, in the first place, speedily concluded all the proceedings about those that were to have been hanged, clearing them and

Francis Roldan and all the rest that were guilty, honoring and rewarding them, which was very disagreeable to those who had behaved themselves well, who said that if they had lived in a disorderly manner and ruined the island they should have been rewarded. Bobadilla having been so free in granting that the King should have only the eleventh part of the gold that was found, besides many other liberties, the Spaniards made bold to ask him to give them Indians to work at it for them and to till the ground. He advised them to join two and two in partnership, and appointed them the people belonging to the caciques, bidding them make the best use of their time, for they knew not how long it would last, little regarding the oppression of the Indians; and thus the Spaniards were better pleased with that libertine sort of life than the discipline they had been kept under by the Admiral."

To relieve Columbus for two years at least from the pandemonium he would have now found in Hispaniola, in consequence of the above mismanagement, would seem to have been a very kind and merciful provision. Probably Isabella was sincere in endorsing it, but it is more than probable that it was only a pretext with Ferdinand. The boundaries of the newly discovered country had been very suggestively enlarged by the several expeditions which had recently sailed on their own account. Ojeda's voyage to the pearl regions of Paria and far to the westward in 1499 was soon followed by that of Pedro Alonzo Niño along Cuba and Paria, bringing back immense stones of gold and pearls, obtained in exchange for a few cheap baubles and trinkets. If Vicente Yanez Pinzon, who also made a

voyage in 1499, was not equally successful in a commercial point of view, he had reported an immense stretch of discovery from the easternmost shores of Brazil, past the mouth of the Amazon, across the Gulf of Paria, the Caribbean Sea, and the Gulf of Mexico. Had he not extended the newly discovered country to regions beyond the equator, where he could no longer be guided by the polar star? Who could conjecture what intelligence and profit Rodrigo de Bastidas, accompanied by La Cosa and Vasco Nuñez Balboa, might bring back in return from the voyage just undertaken in order to extend the explorations of Ojeda beyond the Bay of Venezuela? Had not John and Sebastian Cabot introduced England to the coasts in the north? Were not English ships reported as prowling about among his newly discovered islands? What must have been his musings on hearing from the ship which Cabral, on his way to India, had sent back to report the finding of a territory to the southeast of the Gulf of Paria, extending east of the Pope's line! Ferdinand was bewildered with the news of so much new country. It must be colonized at once by local governments, all under the general government established at San Domingo. But it would never do to establish a viceroy there, who was a foreigner, and who had the power to transmit all his prerogatives and powers to his descendants forever!

Meanwhile, was there not other employment for this restless old Genoese mariner? He had discovered strong currents moving to the westward, along the Pearl Coast, and believed there was a passage somewhere to the west, south of Cuba, which would admit

him to some large sea about the Golden Chersonesus. Here he might become as rich as Vasco de Gama had proved himself on return from Calacut, in India. Therefore, when the King proposed a fourth voyage of discovery to the Admiral, in order that he might find this much-desired passage, the scheme was adopted without much hesitation. Affairs at Hispaniola were too stormy for Columbus to be returned at once. Bobadilla must be removed as soon as possible. The person chosen to supersede him for the present was Nicholas de Ovando, who, according to Las Casas, had a high character for sobriety and justice. He was invested with great authority over all the newly discovered territories. One-third of all the gold on hand and half of all which should be accumulated after his arrival was to be laid aside for the royal exchequer. All trade should be in the monopoly of the crown. The colonists should dwell, as much as possible, in communities. All supplies must come through the royal factor. Every effort must be made for the conversion of the natives, who could now work the mines on wages from the crown. As the natives were dying at an alarming rate under the exhaustive labors in the mines, the negroes, a hardier race, might be introduced to take their place, as slaves. Those born in Spain were preferred, perhaps, on account of their better influence over the natives. Would not the raw heathen recruits from Africa be demoralizing? Columbus might appoint an agent to look after his affairs in Hispaniola, especially the restitution of his property which Bobadilla had appropriated. Alonzo Sanchez de Carvajal was chosen.

Ovando's fleet, which sailed February 13, 1502,

was a striking display of official pomp and magnificence. The thirty ships included a considerable number of heavy tonnage, and the 2,500 people comprised many cavaliers and persons of rank. The governor, brilliant in silks and brocade, had a body-guard of twenty-two esquires, mounted and foot. There were no prison-convicts this time, but respectable married men, with their families. Humboldt has but expressed the feelings of historical students in general in contrasting this grand fleet of the new governor with the paltry squadron which was to bear away on one of the most perilous voyages the Admiral to whose active enterprise, courage, and heroic sufferings Spain was indebted for these new regions of boundless promise.

But it was not a mere popularity of the new governor which induced so large an embarkation. The voyages of the late adventurers had brought the New World into notoriety. The pearl-bearing coasts of Paria were now regarded as a real source of wealth, and the gold-mines of Hayna were "panning out" so largely as to create a new sensation. The colonists, too, were becoming acclimated, and some semblance of civilization had obtained. People might now hope to live with comfort in the Indies.

But the gay ships were soon writhing in a terrible gale. "A large ship was immediately sunk, called Rabida, carrying one hundred and twenty men; the rest were dispersed, throwing overboard all that was upon deck. Two caravels also that came from the Canaries, laden with sugar, were cast away, and the sea drove the chests, casks, and timber of them on the coast of Cadiz and other parts, as well as what had

been on board the ship *La Rabida*. Hence it was generally concluded that the whole fleet had been lost in that tempest, and the news flew to their Majesties, who were still at Granada, which grieved them so much that they retired for eight days and would be seen by nobody."¹ The fleet, less one, reached San Domingo the middle of April, 1502.

How was the active mind of Columbus occupied during these years of waiting? He was composing his *Libros de las Proficias*, a treatise on the fulfilment of certain prophesies, particularly in Isaiah, in which he sees his achievements as a realization. This manuscript, not in the handwriting of Columbus, however—for his rheumatic hand was probably incapacitated—is still in the Biblioteca Columbina at Seville. Certain selections from it have been published in the famous collection of documents by Navarrete. He was still impressed with the duty of rescuing the Holy Sepulchre—how could he, a son of Genoa, that victim of the Moors and seat of the Crusades, feel otherwise?—and appealed to the sovereigns for support in the undertaking. He believed that the end of the world was near—within some 155 years. This notion was based on an opinion of St. Augustine, that the world would endure but 7,000 years, nearly all of which time, according to the most approved methods of reckoning, was then passed. A letter written to the Pope about this time regards the suspension of his titles and rights as a device of Satan to prevent his anticipated enterprise in respect to the Holy Sepulchre. Humboldt, finding the early career of Columbus marked

¹ Herrera.

with a deep and earnest piety, adds: "The religious sentiment thus early evinced by Columbus became converted, with increasing years and under the influence of the persecutions which he had to encounter, into a feeling of melancholy and morbid enthusiasm." This is no doubt true. But, under all and over all, we discover a sublime faith in the unerring results of Divine Providence.

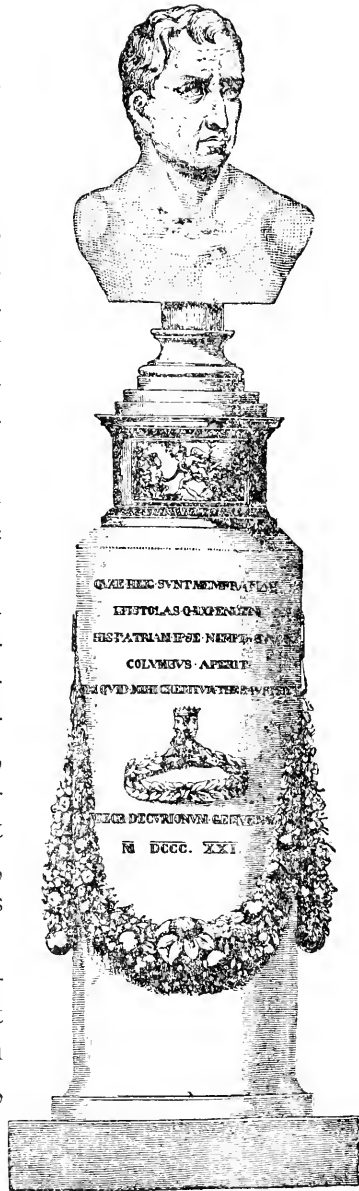
It was about this time that Columbus attested before a notary in Seville those documents affirming his titles and prerogatives which are so carefully preserved at Genoa.

"We are told by the Decurions of Genoa," says Mr. Robert Dodge, "that the library of the Count Michael Angelo Cambiasi, a former Senator of that city, was, after his death, in July, 1816, advertised for sale. Its catalogue contained as one of its Nos. the 'Codice die Privilegii del Colombo.' The Decurions of Genoa, anxious to procure this treasure, had the public sale adjourned until the King's answer had been received to their memorial on the subject. The King of Sardinia, Victor Emanuel, earnestly seconded their wishes, ordering the originals to be deposited in the archives of the court at Turin, where, an accurate copy having been taken, at the solicitations of the Decurions of Genoa, the originals were given up to them and the copy left at Turin. The originals were received by Genoa on the 29th day of January, 1821, and shortly after a beautiful monument or *custodia*, being a marble pillar surmounted by a bust of Columbus, was erected as their honored depository, and placed in an apartment in the beautiful marble palace of the Doges of Genoa.

“A small door of gilded bronze, in the centre, opens to still another door of similar material, behind which, in their golden receptacle, are preserved the sacred relics. The closet is secured by two keys, which are kept respectively as appurtenances of office by the Senator and by the Cardinal Legate of Genoa, during their terms of office. To see the relics, both keys must be obtained on written application to these dignitaries.

“The documents contained in this monument to Columbus consist of forty-four separate charters, warrants, orders, and grants of privileges, beautifully engrossed on vellum by the art of the copyist and illuminator of that age, and the (3) autograph letters of Columbus.

“The documents are enclosed in a bag of richly gilt and embossed scarlet Spanish leather, with a silver lock, being the ‘book of copies of his letters and privileges,’



which in 1502, when he set off upon his fourth and last voyage, he entrusted to the care and guardianship of Signor Francesco de Rivarolo, to forward to his intimate friend at Genoa, 'the most learned doctor,' as he styles him, and 'the ambassador' Signor Nicolo Oderigo, for his safe-keeping and preservation."¹

Of the autograph letters contained in the *custodia*, two are addressed to Oderigo, the *first* dated March 21, 1502, just before the Admiral sailed on his fourth voyage; the *second*, December 27, 1504, soon after his return. The *third* letter is addressed to the Bank of St. George in Genoa, and is given in *facsimile* on the following page.

The following is the translation :

HIGH NOBLE LORDS: Although the body walks about here, the heart is constantly over there. Our Lord has conferred on me the greatest favors to any one since David. The results of my undertaking already appear, and would shine greatly were they not concealed by the blindness of the government. I am going again to the Indies under the auspices of the Holy Trinity, soon to return; and since I am mortal, I leave it with my son Diego that you may receive every year, forever, one-tenth of the entire revenue, such as it may be, for the purpose of reducing the tax upon corn, wine, and other provisions. If that tenth amounts to something, collect it. If not, take at least the will for the deed. I beg of you to entertain regard for the son I have recommended to you. Nicolo de Oderigo knows more about my own affairs than I do myself, and I have sent him transcripts of my privileges and letters for safe-keeping.

¹ See Robert Dodge's Memorials of Columbus.

I should be glad if you could see them. My Lords the King and Queen endeavor to honor me more than ever. May the Holy Trinity preserve your noble persons, and increase the most magnificent house (of St. George). Done in Seville on the 2d day of April, 1502.

Chief Admiral of the ocean, Viceroy and Governor-general of the islands and continents of Asia and the Indies of my Lords the King and Queen, their captain-general of the sea, and of their council.

S.

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CHAPTER XX.

COLUMBUS'S FOURTH VOYAGE.



THE strong current to the westward, between South America and the larger West India Islands, was not seeking an outlet in some western channel, as Columbus supposed. It was that equatorial current which, setting across from the African coast, passes around at the west end of Cuba and by the south shore of Florida, and then, bearing away to the northeast just outside the Atlantic coast, is known as the Gulf Stream. But the conjecture of Columbus was about as correct as could have been made at the time, and gave direction to this his last voyage, which may be considered at once the most trying and least important of them all.

As anticipated in his imagination, however, it was a grand scheme. Locating his supposed *pass* about where that narrow tongue of land, the Isthmus of Darien, separates two immense oceans, the Atlantic and the Pacific, he intended to reach the Indies, from which Vasco de Gama¹ had recently brought so much treasure; and thus joining the country he had discovered with the gorgeous orient of antiquity, pass over the Indian ocean and around Africa, and return to Europe by sailing around the globe. Had the world but been

¹ It would seem clear that the grand commercial and financial success of de Gama's voyage to Calicut, 1497-1498, and the consequent jealousy in Spain, was the mainspring to move Columbus in search of a pass direct to the heart of India.

true to his conception, this would certainly have been one of the grandest voyages ever mapped out, and it would be simply carrying out his scheme, already in mind, when he was on the south of Cuba during his second voyage. *Then* his men were exhausted by the hardships of a long and tedious expedition, his stores were wellnigh consumed, and his ships honeycombed by the *teredo*. *Now* he would start out fresh, with his aim directly before him.

The King and Queen were profoundly interested in the sketch of his plan, but some in the royal council hesitated. Was not the treasury low? Did they not need their scant resources for more pressing claims? Besides, they had not yet received return letters from Ovando. This official might disclose such turpitude on the part of the Admiral in Hispaniola as would prevent his freedom on the ocean! But Ferdinand was eager for the results of so promising an undertaking, and Isabella would listen to no suggestion which might deny the Admiral his small squadron. How shamefully would such ingratitude contrast with the grand fleet and princely retinue of Ovando, but now sailing away to govern the vast territories discovered by this same Admiral, who had just been sent home from his country in chains!

We know that the brave Bartholomew Columbus, who was wanted as the companion of the great discoverer, did not take very readily to the enterprise. If his perilous efforts in the past had met with so poor an appreciation, what had he to hope for in the future? Indeed, it would seem that there was finally some hesitancy on the part of the Admiral himself. Why did the sovereigns send

him the following significant lines?—"Be assured that your imprisonment was very displeasing to us, which you were sensible of, and all men plainly saw, because as soon we heard of it we applied the proper remedies. And you know with how much honor and respect we have always ordered you to be treated, which we now direct should be done, and that you receive all worthy and noble usage, promising that the privileges and prerogatives by us granted you shall be preserved in ample manner, according to the tenor of our letters-patents, which you and your children shall enjoy without any contradiction, as is due in reason; and if it be requisite to ratify them anew we will do it, and will order that your son be put into possession of all, for we desire to honor and favor you in greater matters than these. And be satisfied we will take the due care of your sons and brothers, which shall be done when you are departed; for the employment shall be given to your son, as has been said. We therefore pray you not to delay your departure." "This their Majesties wrote," says Fernando Columbus, "because the Admiral had resolved not to trouble himself any more with the affairs of the Indies."

He adds: "The Admiral, having been well dispatched by their Catholic Majesties, set out from Granada for Seville in the year 1501, and being there, so earnestly solicited the fitting out of his squadron that in a small time he had rigged and provided four ships, the biggest of seventy, the least of fifty tons burden, and one hundred and forty men and boys, of which number I was one."

With these few frail vessels and this small number of men, the Admiral, burdened with years and the in-

firmities and diseases which his many anxieties and great hardships had brought on, was about to sail round the world. But his mind was still buoyant with hope and enthusiasm. His expressive gray eye could still kindle with delight at the thought of disclosing some new part of this great world to mankind.

Fernando, then scarcely fourteen years of age, must have been susceptible of the most vivid impressions as one event after another made up the history of the voyage. "We set sail from Cadiz," he says, "on the 9th of May, 1502, and sailed to St. Catherine's, whence we parted on Wednesday, the 11th of the same month, and went to Arzilla to relieve the Portuguese, who were reported to be in great distress, but when we came thither the Moors had raised the siege. The Admiral, therefore, sent his brother, D. Bartholomew Colon, and me, with the captains of the ships, ashore, to visit the governor of Arzilla, who had been wounded by the Moors in an assault. He returned the Admiral thanks for the visit and his offers, and to this purpose sent some gentlemen to him, among whom were some relatives to Doña Philippa Moniz, the Admiral's wife in Portugal. The same day we set sail, and arriving at Gran Canaria on the 20th of May, cast anchor among the little islands, and on the 24th went over to Mospalomas, in the same island, there to take in wood and water for our voyage. The next night we set out for the Indies, and it pleased God the wind was so fair that, without handling the sails, on Wednesday, the 15th of June, we arrived at the island Matinino with a rough sea and wind. There, according to the custom of those that sail from Spain to the Indies, the Admiral took in fresh

wood and water, and made the men wash their linen, staying till Saturday, when we stood to the westward, and came to Dominica, ten leagues from the other. So, running along the Caribbee Islands, we came to Santa Cruz, and on the 24th of the same month ran along the south side of the island of St. John. Thence we took the way for San Domingo, the Admiral having a mind to exchange one of his ships for another, because it was a bad sailer, and besides could carry no sail, but the side would lie almost under water, which was a hindrance to his voyage, because his design was to have gone directly upon the coast of Paria and keep along that shore till he came upon the strait, which he certainly concluded was about Veragua and Nombre de Dios. But, seeing the fault of the ship, he was forced to repair to San Domingo to change it for a better."

But what was now the condition of this little community? Ovando had arrived on the 15th of April. His official pomp and splendid retinue and appointments threw Bobadilla completely into the shade. The late governor-general's quasi popularity, founded only in a catering to greed for gain and an indulgence of sin and rebellion, now forsook him utterly. He was not sufficiently noticed to be the subject of an accusation, or even a harsh word. He was simply *nonentity*.

Roldan and his accomplices did not escape so easily. They were the subjects of a searching investigation, and most of them were ordered to Spain to answer for their doings. But none of them seemed uneasy as to the result. Had they not influential friends at the court? Was not Fonseca on their side—on the side of any one who might be hostile to Columbus? At any

rate, the great quantity of gold they were about to take home would cover "a multitude of sins."

The returning ships of Ovando's fleet were also to take back the idle, dissolute, and good-for-nothing fellows who, strolling over the island, were the occasion of nearly all the disturbances. The flag-ship was to carry Bobadilla and his vast quantity of gold, amassed by cruelly oppressing the natives. This he confidently hoped would be an ample makeweight against all charges which might be brought against him. Roldan would make him company; and somewhere in the same ship was stored away the kind-hearted and patient Guarionex, who had been a prisoner in Fort Conception ever since the Higuayan war. He was now to appear in Spain a captive, in chains. In this same ship was placed that famous nugget of gold which had been accidentally raked out of a brook by an Indian girl. It was estimated at 1,350,000 maravedis, or about two thousand dollars. This remarkable find had been celebrated by a grand dinner of roast pig, served on the enormous mass of precious metal as a platter. What king had dined off a plate like this! But where was the poor Indian girl at this time? Las Casas thinks she was lucky if she got a taste of the pig!

In the poorest ship of the fleet sailed Carvajal, in charge of four thousand pieces of gold belonging to Columbus. Some of it was revenue recently collected, and some was that which Bobadilla had been compelled to restore.

The splendid fleet was all ready to sail on the 29th of June, when the little squadron of Columbus appeared. Pedro de Jerreros, one of his captains, was

sent at once to ask for the vessel needed in the place of the one so extremely faulty, and to entreat permission to shelter the ships in the harbor during a coming storm, of which the Admiral was exceedingly apprehensive. Both these requests were denied.

If Columbus was refused shelter from the approaching hurricane, he would do what he could to prevent the destruction of the fleet about to sail. Immediately, therefore, he sent back the officer to the governor, to entreat him not to leave the harbor under eight days, as there were unmistakable signs of a tempest just at hand.

The sky was so clear, the air so calm, and the water so smooth that the whole face of nature seemed to contradict this prognostication. The pilots in the harbor made a loud jest of the Admiral. Surely he was a false prophet! But the practised eye of the old seaman was not to be hoodwinked. Whether from "the porpoises and other such like fishes playing upon the surface of the water," or any "other such observations,"¹ he could afford to act on his own prophesies. His crews murmured at being under a man so out of favor that they could not be allowed that privilege of shelter which any stranger might claim. What would they do in these far-off and dangerous waters if any calamity should befall them in this coming tempest? "And though the Admiral was concerned on the same account," says Fernando Columbus, "yet it more vexed him to behold the baseness and ingratitude used towards him in that country he had given to the honor and benefit of Spain, being refused

¹ Herrera, Dec. 1, book v, chap. 1.

to shelter his life in it. Yet his prudence and judgment secured his ships till the next day; the tempest increasing, and the night coming on very dark, three ships broke from him, every one its own way; the men aboard each of them, though all of them in great danger, concluded the others were lost; but they that suffered most were those aboard the ship called *Santo*, who, to save their boat which had been ashore with the captain, Jerreros, dragged it astern, where it overset, and were at last forced to let it go to save themselves. But the caravel *Bermuda* was in much more danger, which, running out to sea, was almost covered with it, by which it appeared the Admiral had reason to endeavor to change it; and all men concluded that, under God, the Admiral's brother was the saving of her by his wisdom and resolution, for, as has been said above, there was not at that time a more expert sailor than he. So that after they had all suffered very much, except the Admiral, it pleased God they met again upon Sunday following in the port of Azua, on the south side of Hispaniola, where, every one giving an account of his misfortunes, it appeared that Bartholomew Colon had weathered so great a storm by flying from land like an able sailor, and that the Admiral was out of danger by lying close to the shore like a cunning astrologer, who knew whence the danger must come. Well might his enemies blame him, therefore, saying he had raised that storm by *art magic*, to be revenged on Bobadilla and the rest of his enemies that were with him, seeing that none of his four ships perished, and that of eighteen¹ which set out with Bobadilla, only one, called

¹ The number is given as twenty-eight by other writers.

La Aguja, or the *Needle*, the worst of them all, held on its course for Spain, where it arrived safe, having on board four thousand pesos in gold, worth eight shillings a peso, belonging to the Admiral, the other three that escaped returning to San Domingo, shattered and in a distressed condition."

With flying colors, with songs and music, the grand fleet of Bobadilla swelled its sails for the homeward voyage, but they had scarcely reached the eastern end of the island when the fury of the hurricane burst upon them. The midnight darkness, the howling tempest, the electric blaze and thunder crash, with an ocean lashed into wild fury—an inconceivable, indescribable catastrophe, almost as sudden as an earthquake, engulfed twenty-six ships. Bobadilla, Roldan and his accomplices, and poor Guarionex anticipated the tribunals of Spain. The fabulous quantities of gold wrung from the suffering toils of the oppressed natives, including the two-thousand-dollar nugget, went down into the ocean's abyss with them.

Las Casas, who was in Hispaniola at the time, says: "We will not inquire now into this remarkable divine judgment, for at the last day of the world it will be made quite clear to us." To affirm divine judgment is at any time a great assumption. Who may draw the line between mere fortuity in the forces of nature and a special exercise of the divine will? But it is safe to say that the noted catastrophe referred to *appears* as much like a divine visitation as anything we could conceive; and whoever believes in providence—and who does not?—will be likely to regard it as such.

“The Admiral, in the port of Azua, gave his men a breathing time after the storm,” says Fernando Columbus, who was in the fleet, “and it being one of the diversions used at sea to fish when there is nothing else to do, I will mention two sorts of fish among the rest which I remember were taken there; the one of them was pleasant, the other wonderful. The first was a fish called saavina, as big as half an ordinary bell, which, lying asleep above the water, was struck with a harping iron from the boat of the ship *Bisceina*, and held so fast that it could not break loose; but being tied with a long rope to the boat, drew it after it as swift as an arrow, so that those aboard the ship, seeing the boat scud about, and not knowing the occasion, were astonished it should do so without the help of the oars, till at last the fish sunk, and being drawn to the ship’s side, was then hauled up with the tackle. The other fish was taken after another manner; the Indians call it manatee, and there are none of the sort in Europe; it is as big as a calf, nothing differing from it in the color and taste of the flesh, but that perhaps it is better and fatter; wherefore those that affirm there are all sorts of creatures in the sea will have it that these fishes are real calves, since within they have nothing like a fish, and feed only on the grass they find along the banks.”¹

After encountering another storm, they put out again on the 14th of July, but the wind was so light that they were carried away by the currents, first to some islands near Jamaica, and to the Queen’s Gardens, then on the south of Cuba. On the 27th, the wind

¹ The *Manatus americanus*, closely related to the *Cetaceans*.

favoring, they sailed to the southwest, and on the 30th reached the island Guanaja, now Bonacca, some 30 miles from the coast of Honduras. The second in size of the Bay Islands, it is some 12 miles long and from one to three miles wide, and rises 1,200 feet. The crews were impressed with its fertility and verdure, especially its lofty pines. The inhabitants were similar to those found elsewhere in these parts, excepting their low foreheads.

Notice that stately canoe, coming as if from a distance, probably from Yucatan! Long as a galley and eight feet wide, it has an elegant awning of palm leaves over the centre, not unlike the cabin of a Venetian gondola. Under this cozily sits a cacique with his wives and children, protected alike from sun and rain. Twenty-five Indians drive their strong paddles. Strangely enough, they have no fear of the Spaniards, but push right up to the side of the Admiral's caravel. This canoe must be on a journey, for it is fairly filled up with a great variety of manufactured articles and with the various products of the locality—a sort of voluntary exhibition of the things to be found here. And are not some of these weapons superior to any seen in these parts heretofore? Those hatchets are not of stone, but of copper! Here are wooden swords with double edges firmly set with sharp flints tied into grooves with the dried intestines of fishes; such swords were afterwards found in Mexico. Here are bells, and also other articles, made of copper, with the rude crucible in which that metal was melted, and vessels of clay and of marble, and utensils made of hard wood. The provisions, too, are worth noticing—the

cacao, used both as food and as money; a sort of beer made from maize; also bread made from the same article, and some made from roots. The women wear fine cotton mantles, richly worked in gay colors, and the men have cotton cloths about the loins. Both sexes have a particular sense of modesty for Indians, which is especially noticed by the boy Fernando when they are hauled over the side of the ship as captured persons. "I must add," he says, "that we ought to admire their modesty; for it falling out that, in getting them aboard, some were taken by the cloths they had before their privities, they would immediately clap their hands to cover them; and the women would hide their faces, and wrap themselves up, as we said the Moorish women do at Granada. This moved the Admiral to use them well, to restore their canoe, and give them some things in exchange for those that had been taken from them. Nor did he keep any one of them but an old man, whose name was Giumba, who seemed to be the wisest and chief of them, to learn something of him concerning the country, and that he might draw others to converse with the Christians, which he did very readily and faithfully all the while we sailed where his language was understood. Therefore, as a reward for his services, when we came where he was not understood, the Admiral gave him some things, and sent him home very well pleased."

Those Indians in the canoe at the island had endeavored, by signs, to tell something of the richness, industry, and cultivation of their country to the westward, and urged Columbus to steer in that direction. As soon as they perceived that he was in search of

gold, they gave him to understand that in their country the people wore heavy crowns made of it, and great rings on their arms and legs; that their chairs, tables, and chests were covered with it, and even their cloths were woven with it. When coral was shown them they intimated that their women wore it profusely as ornaments, hanging from the head down the back. They also claimed to have plenty of pepper, and to have ships, cannon, bows and arrows, swords, and all kinds of armor. This was true Indian style, and there may have been little or nothing in it; but if Columbus had gone westward and discovered Yucatan and Mexico, who may conjecture how it might have improved his fortunes!

“Upon the information given by that old Indian,”¹ says Herrera, “the Admiral forbore proceeding to the westward, which would have carried him to Yucatan and New Spain, and, steering to the eastward,² the first land he saw was a point, which he called de Casinas, because there were many trees on it, the fruit whereof is a sort of little apples, good to eat, in his language called casinas, as the Admiral said. The natives that

¹ This old Indian could draw a rude chart of the coast, and probably confounding the isthmus with the Admiral's notion of a pass—for they could communicate only by signs—completely gained his confidence as a guide to the riches of the interior of India.

² That Columbus came eastward against the westward current, which suggested his pass to India, has always been a mystery. But if Vespuccius's first voyage, 1497-1498—which must have been known to the Admiral—was westward along the Honduras coast, and around Yucatan, the Gulf of Mexico, and Florida, as Varnhagen has clearly shown, it is but in accordance with Columbus's usual good sense that he should have tried a new route in search of his desired pass, especially since his experienced Indian guide assured him that such pass was in this direction. He must have learned by this time that Cuba was an island, and that all along and around to the west and north was a continuous continent.

lived nearest to that point wore jackets of fine colors, like the short shirts above spoken of, and small clouts to cover their nakedness. On Sunday, the 14th of August, the adelantado went ashore with many of the men to hear mass, as they generally used to do when they had an opportunity; and the Wednesday following he went again to take possession for their Catholic Majesties, at which time he found above one hundred of the natives on the shore, loaded with provisions, as maize, fowl,¹ venison, fish, and fruit. When they came up to the adelantado, the Indians fell back without speaking one word, and he ordered they should give them looking-glasses, hawk's bells, pins, and the like; and the next day above two hundred men appeared in the same place, loaded with such victuals, and several sorts of lupines,² like beans, and other fruit, for the country is very fertile, green, and beautiful, where there was an infinite multitude of pine trees, oaks, six or seven sorts of palms, and many mirabolau-trees, bearing a pleasant and odoriferous fruit. They understood that there were leopards, and might have been informed that there were many tigers. Those people had not great foreheads, like the islanders, spoke several languages; some of them were quite naked, others only covered their privities, and others wore jackets without sleeves, that reached not below their navels. Their bodies were wrought with fire, like the Moors, some having lions, others stags, or such like creatures drawn on them; instead of caps, they wore on their heads cotton clouts, white and red, and some of them had tufts of hair on their foreheads like fringes.

¹ Fernando Columbus says the fowls were large white hens and geese.

² Like red and white kidney-beans, Fernando says.

“When they were fine for their festivals, some colored their faces black, others red, others streaked with several colors, others painted their chins and noses, and others made their eyes very black, all which were looked upon as great ornaments.¹ And because there were others along that coast who made such great holes in their ears that an egg might pass through them, he called that part *la Costa de la Oreja*, or the Coast of the Ear.”

We must now follow the little fleet to the eastward, along the Honduras coast, stemming the current which here runs westward like a mighty river, and beating against contrary winds. To quote the Admiral's own language to the sovereigns: “Hence, as opportunity afforded, I pushed on for terra firma in spite of the wind and a fearful contrary current, against which I contended for sixty days, and during that time only made seventy leagues. All this time I was unable to get into harbor, nor was there any cessation of the tempest, which was one continuation of rain, thunder and lightning; indeed, it seemed as if it were the end of the world. I at length reached the Cape of Gracios a Dios, and after that the Lord granted me fair wind and tide; this was on the twelfth of September. Eighty-eight days did this fearful tempest continue, during which I was at sea, and saw neither sun nor stars; my ships lay exposed, with sails torn, and anchors, rigging, cables, boats, and a great quantity of provisions lost; my people were very weak and humbled in spirit, many of them promising to lead a religious life, and all making vows and promising to perform pilgrimages, while some of them

¹ To the boy Fernando Columbus they looked like devils.

would frequently go to their messmates to make confession. Other tempests have been experienced, but never of so long a duration or so fearful as this ; many whom we looked upon as brave men on several occasions showed considerable trepidation ; but the distress of my son who was with me grieved me to the soul, and the more when I considered his tender age, for he was but thirteen years old, and he enduring so much toil for so long a time. Our Lord, however, gave him strength even to enable him to encourage the rest, and he worked as if he had been eighty years at sea, and all this was a consolation to me. I myself had fallen sick, and was many times at the point of death, but from a little cabin that I had caused to be constructed on deck I directed our course. My brother was in the ship that was in the worst condition and the most exposed to danger ; and my grief on this account was the greater that I brought him with me against his will.”¹

An inexpressible relief it must have been to Columbus and his crews when the ships rounded the cape to go south along what is now known as the Mosquito Coast. The eastern wind, against which they had sailed with so much toil and hardship for nearly two months, was now *on the beam*, and wafted them on delightfully. In pious recognition of the relief, Columbus named the cape *Gracias a Dios*—Thanks to God. The coast landscape along which they sailed was greatly varied. Here a bold promontory, rugged and craggy, stretched out into the sea ; there a fertile vale, with verdant banks laved by charming rivers, delighted the eye. At the mouth of this river grew immense reeds, large as a man’s leg ;

¹ Major’s Select Letters.

the outlet of another swarmed with fishes, tortoises, and alligators. That cluster of twelve small islands near the coast bore a fruit resembling the lemon.

Having sailed some sixty-two leagues in this direction, and being much in need of wood and water, on the 16th of September the boats were sent up a deep river, but as they returned a strong wind from off the sea brought the waves with such force against the current of the river that one of the boats was engulfed, and all on board were lost. This calamity cast a gloom over the weary crews, and the Admiral himself was so impressed with melancholy that he named this river *El Rio del Desastre*.

On the 25th of September they reached an inviting place of anchorage, in the mouth of a river, opposite which was a most enchanting island, covered with luxuriant groves of palms. Here was also the graceful banana, with its curious blossoms and fruit at the same time; the cocoanut tree, and a most fragrant and luscious fruit which the Admiral mistook for the mirabolane of the East Indies. So odoriferous and strikingly beautiful were the flowers and shrubs on this island that he called it La Huerta—The Garden.

Scarcely a league away was an Indian town named Cariari, finely located on a river. The country in every direction was charmingly diversified with hill and dale, and most luxuriant forests of such height that, as Las Casas says, they seemed to reach the sky.

The natives, alarmed at the unwonted appearance of the ships, rushed to the shores, some armed "with bows and arrows, others with staves of palm-tree, as black as a coal and hard as horn, pointed with the

bones of fishes, others with clubs.”¹ The men, with hair braided and wrapped around their heads, and the women, with hair trimmed short, were all alike intent on the defence of their country. The Spaniards, however, made no attempt to land, but for two days remained on their ships, quietly resting or looking after their damaged provisions and their ships, already the worse for the voyage. The natives, seeing no signs of war on the part of the strangers, were inclined to be friendly. Being partially clothed, they take off their mantles and wave them like banners, thus inviting the Spaniards to land. They even swim to the ships, bringing their rude arms, “cotton jerkins and large pieces like sheets, and *guaninics*, which is pale gold they wear about their necks.” But the Admiral will not trade. He will only make presents, for he wants the savages to know how generous these white men are!

The natives grow more earnest when they discover the strangers are not disposed to land, and beckon to them still more emphatically. “At last,” says Fernando Columbus, “perceiving nobody went ashore, they took all the things that had been given them, without reserving any, and tying them together, left them in the same place where the boats first went ashore, and where our men found them on the Wednesday following, when they landed. The Indians about this place, believing that the Christians did not confide in them, they sent an ancient man of an awful presence with a flag upon a staff, and two girls, the one about eight, the other about fourteen years of age,

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter xci.

who, putting them into the boat, made signs that the Christians might safely land. Upon their request they went ashore to take in water, the Indians taking great care not to do anything that might fright the Christians, and when they saw them return to their ships they made signs to them to take along with them the young girls with their *guaninies* about their necks, and at the request of the old man that conducted them they complied and carried them aboard."

These young hostages manifested no fear whatever, but deported themselves in the most amiable and modest manner. This won upon the Admiral, who treated them most generously—feasting them, clothing them, and afterwards sending them ashore, where they were received with marked satisfaction. In the evening the Spaniards, going ashore again, met the girls, surrounded by a multitude of their friends. All the presents were returned. If the gifts of these savages could not be accepted, they were too proud to be put under obligations by receiving those of the strangers. This surely was a remarkable trait of independence which one cannot fail to respect.

Everything was done by the Indians to win the Spaniards. The adelantado going ashore the next day, two of the principal persons, wading out into the water to meet him, lifted him out of his boat in their arms, carried him to land, and in the most reverential manner seated him on a grass plot. Thinking this was the time to draw out information from them as to the country, he began to ask them questions, and ordered a notary to take down their statements. The Indians looked with surprise on the pen, ink, and paper, and

mistaking the act of writing for the exercise of some necromatic art, fled in terror. Returning by and by, they scattered a sweet-smelling powder in the air, and burnt some of it in such a way as to cause the smoke to go towards the Christians, as if they were trying to counteract some evil spell.

Before the ships left, the Admiral ordered his brother to go ashore, along with a number of others, and learn what he could of the nature of the country and the habits of the people. Though he did not find pure gold, he saw some quite extraordinary sights. In a great wooden palace covered with canes were "several tombs, in one of which there was a dead body dried up and embalmed; in another, two bodies wrapped up in cotton sheets, without any ill scent; and over each tomb was a board with the figures of beasts carved on it, and on some of them the effigies of the person buried there, adorned with *guaninics*, beads, and other things they most value. These being the most civilized Indians in those parts, the Admiral ordered one to be taken and learn of him the secrets of the country; and of seven that were taken, two of the chiefest were picked out and the rest sent away with some gifts and civil entertainment, that the country might not be left in an uproar, telling them they were to serve as guides upon that coast, and then be set at liberty. But they believing they were taken out of covetousness, that they might ransom themselves with their goods and things of value, the next day abundance of them came down to the shore and sent four aboard the Admiral as their ambassadors, to treat about the ransom, offering some things, and freely giving two hogs of the country, which,

though small, are very wild. The Admiral, therefore, observing the policy of the people, was more desirous to be acquainted with them, and would not depart till he had learned something of them, but would not give ear to their offers. He therefore ordered some trifles to be given to the messengers, that they might not go away dissatisfied, and that they should be paid for their hogs."¹

On the 5th of October the Admiral was again under way. Passing along what is now called Costa Rica, or Rich Coast, after sailing some twenty-two leagues, he entered a magnificent bay, six leagues in length and three in breadth. There were three or four entrances, and it was full of the most enchanting islands, laden with fruits and flowers, and the channels between them being so deep and clear that they seemed like the canal streets of a city. As the vessels passed along, "the boughs of the trees touched the shrouds and rigging." Having cast anchor, the boats landed on one of these charming islands. Here were twenty canoes, the people being near by, among the trees. Their timidity, if they had any, was soon removed by the encouraging words of the Indian guides from Cariari, and they approached the Spaniards for barter. Here was the first pure gold found along these coasts. The natives had large plates of this precious metal hung to their necks by cotton cords. Some of the guanin or poor gold, also, in the shape of eagles, they had. So unconscious were these natives of the value of pure gold that one of them exchanged a large plate of it, weighing ten ducats, for three hawk's bells.

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter xci.

Not far away, on the continent, there was plenty of it, they said.

The next day the boats went to the mainland at the lower end of the bay. The shores were abrupt and hilly, the houses being grouped in villages about the highest points of the landscape. Behold the Indians in those ten canoes, their heads adorned with flowers and rude coronets made of beasts' claws and birds' quills! Nearly all of them have plates of gold about their necks, but they will not part with them. How the Spaniards covet one of those plates, worth fourteen ducats, and that eagle worth twenty-two ducats! But plenty of this metal can be obtained along the coast—particularly at Veragua, some twenty-five leagues distant. So say the natives. But the Admiral will not be delayed by barter, for he is in haste to find that strait mapped out in his head for so long a time.

But the Spaniards cannot leave till they have caught some of those fishes of which there are abundant shoals in this bay. They also hunt the wild animals along the shore, and examine the roots used as food, and the grain and flowers. "The men, who are painted all over, face and body, of several colors, as red, black, and white, go naked, only covering their privities with a narrow cotton cloth."¹

From this bay, called Caravaro, they put out on the 17th, and enter the river Guaig, some twelve leagues farther on. On attempting to land, they encounter two hundred Indians, armed with clubs and wooden swords and lances. They rush into the water up to

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter xcii.

their middle, brandish their weapons, blow their conch-shells, beat their wooden drums, throw salt-water at the strangers, and squirt at them the juice of the herbs they are chewing—tobacco, perhaps. But the Spaniards beckoned to them in a cordial manner, and the native interpreters spoke goodly words for them, and these savages were soon showing themselves friendly by trading away for a few trinkets *seventeen plates of gold, worth one hundred and fifty ducats.*

The next day, the Spaniards came ashore again to renew their trade. They found the Indians sitting along the shore, in a sort of booths they had extemporized during the night, and were afraid to land. They called to them, but none would come. Presently the Indians blew their conchs, beat their drums, gave their war-whoop as they ran into the water almost up to the boats, and threatened to hurl their darts if the strangers did not go away. This was a little too much for the Spaniards. They shot a cross-bow and wounded one in the arm, then fired a cannon; and the Indians, "thinking that the sky was falling upon them, took to their heels, striving who should be foremost." Now they were in a mood for trade. Four of the Spaniards landed, "and calling them back, they came very peaceably, leaving their arms behind them, and exchanged three plates of gold, saying they had no more, because they did not come prepared to trade, but to fight."

Fully in the conviction that the supremely desired *pass* is in this direction, the Admiral continues along the coast, and they soon anchor in the mouth of a river called Cotiba. Here, also, the Indians are up in

arms. The forests echo to the sound of conchs and drums—the people are being called out in defence against the strangers. Now a canoe with two Indians comes off from the shore, and inquires who these strange beings are and what they want. Exchanging a few words with the interpreters from Cariari, they are conciliated, and come on board the Admiral's ship in the most cordial manner, trading the gold plates suspended from their necks for trinkets. Satisfied as to the peaceable intention of the strangers, they go ashore to report the same to their cacique. Now there comes another canoe with three Indians. They also barter the gold plates from their necks. "Amity thus settled, our men went ashore, where they found abundance of people, with their king, who differed in nothing from the rest but that he was covered with one leaf of a tree, because at that time it rained hard; and to give his subjects a good example he exchanged a plate of the precious metal and bade them barter for theirs, which in all were nineteen ducats of pure gold."¹

The signs of civilization were surely encouraging, for here was a solid structure of stone and mortar. But it would not do to tarry. Before a fresh breeze, they ran past some five towns, where, the interpreters said, there was plenty of gold. Here, indeed, in Veragua, which name afterwards spread over the whole region, the plates of gold were made which they had seen along the coast. The next day, as they came to a town called Cubiga, the natives affirmed that they had reached the end of the gold coast. But this gold

¹ Fernando Columbus.

region they were thus leaving behind could be explored at any time. The grand desideratum now was the *strait*—alias Malacca. All unwittingly, the Indians were helping to form a great delusion in the mind of the Admiral. The narrow place they spoke of—just at hand—between the two seas was not “*narrow water*,” as he understood them, but “*narrow land*.” But the mere language of gestures on the part of these savages was too awkward to be discriminating to the prejudiced mind of Columbus, so on they went for the “*strait*.” Somewhere just the other side of this promising *terra firma* he would find all the wealth of India.¹ Alas! *the rich country* the natives were describing to him was as delusive as *the strait*; for they, in all probability, simply had vague conceptions

¹ The vision which now allured Columbus can best be given in his own words to the sovereigns concerning this voyage, written from Jamaica: “As I had found everything true that had been told me in the different places which I had visited, I felt satisfied it would be the same with respect to Ciguare, which, according to their account, is nine days’ journey across the country westward; they tell me there is a great quantity of gold there, and that the inhabitants wear coral ornaments on their heads, and very large coral bracelets and anklets, with which article also they adorn and inlay their seats, boxes, and tables. They also said that the women there wore necklaces hanging down to their shoulders. All the people agree in the report I now repeat, and their account is so favorable that I should be content with the title of the advantages that their description holds out. They are all likewise acquainted with the pepper-plant. According to the account of these people, the inhabitants of Ciguare are accustomed to hold fairs and markets for carrying on their commerce, and they showed me also the mode and form in which they transact their various exchanges; others assert that their ships carry guns, and that the men go clothed and use bows and arrows, swords, and cuirasses, and that on shore they have horses, which they use in battle, and that they wear rich clothes and have most excellent houses. They also say that the sea surrounds Ciguare, and that at ten days’ journey from thence is the river Ganges; these lands appear to hold the same relation to Veragua as Tortosa to Fontarabia, or Pisa to Venice.”

of the wealthy and semi-civilized nations of Central or South America.

On the 2d of November the squadron entered a large and charming harbor. In every direction, the elevated landscape had the aspect of high cultivation. The houses, about a stone's throw or bow-shot from each other, were in the midst of fruit-trees, graceful groves of palm, corn-fields, and gardens abounding in vegetables and pineapples. This delightful spot Columbus named Puerto Bello—Port Beautiful. A whole week of storm shut them in here. But the scene was enlivened by the native canoes going and coming constantly, with fruits, vegetables, and balls of cotton finely spun, "which they gave for some trifles, such as points and pins." Gold there was none, except the small plates hanging from the noses of the cacique and his seven principal men. The naked bodies of these people were painted red, and by way of contrast the cacique was black.

On the 9th of November the fleet went to a point since called Nombre de Dios, eight leagues farther on; but the next day they were forced back one-half that distance by stress of weather, and took refuge behind a group of islands. In every direction, on the islands and on the mainland, fields of Indian corn and fruit and vegetable gardens greeted the eye; so the Admiral called this place Puerto de Bastimentos—Port of Provisions.

Here they remained about two weeks, repairing their leaky vessels, which the *teredos* of these tropical seas had thoroughly riddled. During this stay they had at least one amusing incident. A boat well manned

went in pursuit of a canoe, and the Indians, taking fright as they came within a stone's throw, plunged into the water to try their chances of escape by swimming. The Spaniards pulled the oars with all their might for a mile and a half, but could not overtake one of them; for as they approached an Indian he would "dive like a duck, and come up a bow-shot or two from the place." The boy Fernando enjoyed this chase exceedingly, and seemed pleased to see the boat return without so much as an Indian, after such strenuous and exhaustive exertions.

November 23d they sailed farther on, and stopped at a place called Guiga, where they found some three hundred natives ready to trade away provisions and small gold ornaments in their noses and ears for the usual trinkets. Again they hoisted sail. On the 24th boisterous weather drove the squadron into a small harbor, which the Admiral named El Retrete, "that is, Retired Place, because it could not contain above five or six ships together, and the mouth of it was not above fifteen or twenty paces over, and on both sides of it rocks appearing above the water as sharp as diamonds, and the channel between them was so deep that they found no bottom, though if the ships inclined never so little to either side the men might leap ashore."¹ Both Las Casas and Fernando Columbus think that the Admiral was duped into this retreat by the desire on the part of his men sent to examine the place to communicate slyly with the natives. As the water was so deep that the vessels could not anchor, except near the bank, the sailors

¹ Life of Columbus by his son, chapter xciii.

used to get away among the natives at night without permission. At first they were entertained with the usual hospitality, but their conduct was so outrageously covetous and licentious that their hosts soon sought revenge. Every night there were brawls, and before long there was bloodshed on both sides. Now the nearness of the ships to the shore was as convenient for an attack from the enraged Indians as it had been for the nightly escapes of the sailors. The Admiral was obliged to resort to his guns. But the mere noisy discharges of powder failed to terrify them. The savage throngs had become skeptical of the divine nature of these beings, worse than human, and they responded to the noise and smoke with shrieks and yells, and threshing the trees with their clubs and lances. This would never do. The ships were too near the shore to risk being boarded in an instant by this infuriated mob of savages. The guns were loaded with balls, and aimed at a hillock on which the natives were clustered. Now the general havoc "made them sensible there was a thunderbolt as well as thunder," and they fled in terror once and for all.

We must not leave this close retreat without looking about on the shore. All around the land is low and level, the grass being thin, and the trees scattered here and there—the whole having the effect of a sort of open park. See those alligators which crawl out here in vast numbers to sun themselves on the beach! The air is impregnated with their odor, "as if all the musk in the world were together." The Indians say that they will drag a sleeping man into the water; but they seem quite timorous, and hustle into the sea like frightened seals when attacked.

There was yet another phase to this weather-bound life of two weeks in El Retrete, among savages and alligators. The crews were becoming exceeding impatient to turn back. "That strait"—what was the use of running after that strait? What would they carry back from it? Better return to the gold coast they had been passing. Who could tell how much wealth they might take home from thence? Many of the more ignorant and superstitious believed that the strong east and northeast winds shutting them in were the result of sorcery on the part of the Indians. And what defence could there be against such witchcraft? The officers cried out against the crazy, worm-eaten ships. In the tempests which threatened them these would be crushed like mere shells. Even the Admiral himself might well be wondering why he did not reach the much-desired strait, and would surely become convinced of the folly of increasing the distance from home with such mutinous crews and unsafe crafts. He would go back to Veragua and lay in a store of gold, which might more than compensate for his failure in finding the "strait," and thus silence the cavillings of his enemies.¹

"Here, then," says Irving, "ended the lofty anticipations which had elevated Columbus above all mercenary interests, which had made him regardless of hardships

¹ Bastidas, in his recent voyage, had reached this point. Whether this was known to Columbus is not certain. On his way out, as he touched at San Domingo, where that navigator then was, he may have gained such intelligence, or the natives around Veragua may have advised him. At any rate it must now have been pretty clear to the Admiral that the coast was "practically discovered from Trinidad to Guanaja, and that between these two islands is a shore-line of continent unbroken by any strait."—*H. H. Bancroft's History of Central America*, vol. 1, p. 217.

and perils and had given an heroic character to the early part of this voyage. It is true, he had been in pursuit of a mere chimera, but it was the chimera of a splendid imagination and a penetrating judgment. If he was disappointed in his expectation of finding a strait through the Isthmus of Darien, it was because nature herself had been disappointed, for she appears to have attempted to make one, but to have attempted it in vain."

On the 5th of December the squadron put out from El Retrete, and sailing ten leagues westward anchored at night in Puerto Bello. They had barely passed into the open sea the next day when the wind shifted to the west. For three months he had hoped in vain for a wind in this direction. It seemed as if the wind was bound to be against him. Should he turn back and renew his search for the *strait*? A west wind never lasted long in that region, at least at that time of year. Probably it would soon change.

The wind increased and shifted about so from point to point that the sailors were completely baffled. Again they headed for Puerto Bello, but when, after great effort in getting back, they awaited a favorable wind to enter, it suddenly blew furiously off shore, driving the vessels out to sea. The sky was darkened, the clouds were heavily charged with electricity, and a most unparalleled tempest arose. "Never," says Columbus, "was the sea so high, so terrific, and so covered with foam; not only did the wind oppose our proceeding onward, but it also rendered it highly dangerous to run in for any headland, and kept me in that sea, which seemed to me as a sea of blood, seething like a cauldron on a mighty fire.

Never did the sky look more fearful ; during one day and one night it burned like a furnace, and every instant I looked to see if my masts and my sails were not destroyed, for the lightnings flashed with such alarming fury that we all thought the ships must have been consumed. All this time the waters from heaven never ceased descending, not to say that it rained, for it was like a repetition of the deluge. The men were at this time so crushed in spirit that they longed for death as a deliverance from so many martyrdoms. Twice already had the ships suffered loss in boats, anchors, and riggings, and were now lying bare without sails." Fernando says, " When we were most in hopes to get into port we were quite beat off again, and sometimes with such thunder and lightning that the men durst not open their eyes. The ships seemed to be just sinking, and the sky to come down. Sometimes the thunder was so continued that it was concluded some ship fired its cannon to desire assistance. Another time there would fall such storms of rain that it would last violently for two or three days, insomuch that it looked like another universal deluge. This perplexed all the men and made them almost despair, seeing they could not get half an hour's rest, being continually wet, turning sometimes one way and sometimes another, struggling against all the elements, and dreading them all ; for in such dreadful storms they dread the fire in flashes of lightning, the air for its fury, the water for the terrific waves, and the earth for the hidden rocks and sands." But the storm reached its climax on Tuesday, the 13th, when a great whirling cone rose out of the waves, and mounting towards the heavens met a like cone, which

whirled downwards from the inky clouds, and the two, joining in an angry column connecting sea and sky, moved furiously toward the ships. Every face was ghastly white and shrieks of despair arose. The Admiral was stretched on his couch on deck, helpless with a raging fever. Alarmed by the cries of the sailors, he sprang up to behold the writhing column almost upon him. Did ever man face a more stupendous peril? In the helplessness of the moment he began to recite the gospel of St. John, describing a cross in the air with his sword. The whirling, dancing column, uniting the ocean beneath and the clouds above, passed between the ships and on out of sight, causing no harm beyond making the water to boil and toss in every direction.

“The ships being now almost shattered to pieces with the tempest,” says Fernando Columbus, “and the men quite spent with labor, a day or two’s calm gave them some respite, and brought such multitudes of sharks about the ships that they were dreadful to behold, especially for such as are superstitious, because, as it is reported that ravens at a great distance smell out dead bodies, so some think these sharks do, which if they lay hold of a man’s arm or leg cut it off like a razor, for they have two rows of teeth in the nature of a saw. Such a multitude of these were killed with the hook and chain that, being able to destroy no more, they lay swimming about the water, and they are so greedy that they do not only bite at carrion, but may be taken with a red rag upon the hook. I have seen a tortoise taken out of the belly of one of these sharks, and it afterwards lived aboard the ship; but out of another was taken the whole head of one of his own kind,

we having cut it off and thrown it into the water, as not good to eat, no more than they are themselves, and that shark had swallowed it, and to us it seemed contrary to reason that one creature should swallow the head of another of its own bigness, which is not to be admired,¹ because their mouth reaches almost to their belly, and the head is shaped like an olive. Though some looked upon them to forbode mischief, and others thought them bad fish, yet we all made much of them by reason of the want we were in, having been now above eight months at sea, so that we had consumed all the fish and flesh brought from Spain; and that, with the heat and moisture of the sea, the biscuit was so full of maggots that, as God shall help me, I saw many that staid till night to eat the pottage or brewis made of it, that they might not see the maggots; and others were so used to eat them that they did not mind to throw them away when they saw them, because they might lose their supper if they were so very curious.

“Upon Saturday, the 17th, the Admiral put into a port three leagues east of Pennon, which the Indians called Huiva. It was like a great bay, where we rested three days, and going ashore saw the inhabitants dwell upon the tops of trees, like birds, laying sticks across from bough to bough, and building huts upon them rather than houses. Though we knew not the reason of this strange custom, yet we guessed it was done for fear of the griffons there are in that country, or of enemies; for all along that coast the

¹ Or wondered at.

people at every league's distance are great enemies to one another."¹

Storms and shifting winds continue. Now they put out to sea, but again the wind changes to their disadvantage, or becomes so boisterous that they are obliged to run into the nearest harbor. Well, indeed, may the Admiral name this the "Coast of Contrasts." Having spent nearly a month in beating his way from Puerto Bello to Veragua, some thirty leagues, he sounded the river Yebra, which he named Belen or Bethlehem, and the Veragua. As the former was the deeper, notwithstanding its bar at the mouth, they entered it by means of the boats and found a village on its banks. Here they were confronted by a well-developed and brave people, who were disposed to contest their landing, but were soon conciliated. Being questioned as to the gold-mines, they were at first inclined to be reticent or equivocal. Finally they gave the impression that they were to be found about the Veragua. To that river, therefore, the boats are sent the next day. These people must be of Carib origin. How else do they come to be so brave? A whole fleet of canoes comes out to meet the Spaniards, and the shores are lined with men on defence. But the interpreter intercedes, saying that these peculiar strangers have come only to barter, and this soothes them and induces them to trade twenty plates of gold, several tubes filled with the precious dust, as well as masses of the crude ore, for trinkets and gewgaws as usual. They said the precious metal was obtained in the neighboring mountains. When they went in

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter xciv.

search of it they fasted for twenty days and left their women at home.

These reports are so flattering that the Admiral concludes to sojourn in the vicinity. Belen being the deeper river, the two smaller caravels cross the bar January 9th, and the other two follow at flood-tide the next day. Now the natives become exceedingly cordial, and bring great quantities of fish, with which this river abounds; also a variety of gold ornaments for traffic, but it all comes from Veragua.

To the Veragua, then, the adelantado will go with boats well armed. Having ascended half a league, he meets the Quibian,¹ or chieftain, tall, powerful, and of a warlike aspect. He is very amiable, and seems perfectly at ease amidst the canoes in which his subjects are attending him. He takes off his gold ornaments and gives them to the adelantado, highly gratified over the triukets and what-nots received in return. This powerful chief,² with many chiefs under him, is shrewd enough to see that he has met men of force and influence, such as he has not known hitherto.

The next day he calls on the Admiral, and is well entertained. Impressive, indeed, it must have been to see these fine specimens of the human race, each from

¹ This is now regarded as a title rather than a name.

² "On the whole, the Quibian is as fine a specimen of his race as the adelantado is of his. And thus they are fairly met, the men of Europe and the men of North America; and as in the gladiatorial combat, which opens with a smiling salutation, this four-century struggle begins with friendly greetings. Pity it is they are outwardly not more evenly matched; pity it is that the European with his superior civilization, his saltpetre and bloodhounds, his steel weapons and strange diseases, should be allowed to do his robbery so easily."—*H. H. Bancroft, Hist. Central America*, vol. 1, p. 220.

the opposite side of the globe, trying to communicate with each other by grimaces and gestures. The Quibian is "taciturn and cautious," exchanges some presents with the Admiral, and, after an hour, takes his leave. Meanwhile his attendants have "trucked" gold for gewgaws.

But the ships are scarcely more secure here in the river than they were outside in the sea. If Neptune failed to swamp them in the latter, the storm demons will open the floods upon the mountains in order that the rivers may run mad. The vessels are wrenched from their anchorage and hurled against each other, and the foremast of the Admiral's ship is carried away. Neither can they run out to sea, on account of the breakers on the bar at Belen's mouth.

The storm having once more abated, on the 6th of February the adelantado takes sixty-eight well-armed men, who push the boats up the Veragua in search of the reputed gold-mines. About a league and a half up the river they come upon the home of the Quibian, with the dwellings of his people arranged about him. The chieftain comes to meet them. He is surrounded by his subjects, but they are all unarmed. All the signs and signals are for peace. This on the outside, like the bright daubs of paint on his naked body, but at heart there are no doubt many misgivings. One of his attendants fishes a big stone out of the river, and, washing it thoroughly, rolls it up as a throne for his chieftain, who deports himself with great respect in the commanding presence of Don Bartholomew. He furnishes the latter with guides to the gold regions of the interior, the mines being in the mountains, which

begin to rise some six leagues distant and reach above the clouds. All the way, about the roots of the trees and everywhere, the earth sparkles with golden grains. The adelantado returns greatly elated. Already he sees wealthy Spanish cities in the plains and on the hills. "Which seeing, the Quibian grimly smiled that they should deem their work already done, himself subdued, the land their own, and he smiled to think how he had sent them round and away from his own rich mines to the poorer and more distant fields of Urirá, his ancient enemy. Then the adelantado explored westward, and came to the town and river of this Urirá, and to the towns of Dururi, Cobrabá, and Cotiba, where he obtained gold and provisions."¹

This delightful country, laden with the most fragrant and luscious fruits, with rich fields of maize six leagues in extent, a territory of twenty days' journey, so abounding in gold that one had only to turn up the stones and pick it up—pick it up in such abundance that a man of good-will might easily obtain in ten days as much as a boy could carry!—was not this the place above all others to found a colony? Hispaniola was indeed wonderful, but bore no comparison to this. If among the natives there one occasionally espied a small nose-ornament of gold, here nearly every one had a golden mirror hung by a cotton cord to his neck. Indeed, he had seen more signs of gold here in *two days* than in Hispaniola in *four years*. Again the Admiral turns to the sacred scriptures and to the writings of divines, ancient and modern, and is well satisfied that this is the "Golden

¹ H. H. Bancroft's Hist. Central Am., vol. 1, p. 221.

Chersonesus." Here he would found an empire which should include all these rich gold-mines in the territories of the different chiefs in the neighborhood. Thus Hispaniola, so disappointing to all and so ill-fated from every point of view, would be completely eclipsed. The adelantado was of the same mind as his brother, and agreed to remain in charge of the colony, which should include the greater part of the people in the squadron, and through them he would develop the gold-mines. The Admiral, meanwhile, would return to Spain for reinforcements.

The plan adopted, everything moved with energy. The eighty men who were to remain were divided into parties of ten each, and on a pretty rise of ground bordering a creek, near the mouth of the Belen, they built a picturesque village. The houses could not have been large. We simply know that they were built of wood and thatched with palm leaves. Aye! one was large, designed as a warehouse and magazine. But the main depository was one of the ships, which was to remain in the harbor. In this the provisions might be most securely stored, and it might serve the adelantado in case of an emergency. The store of provisions was small indeed—a little wine, oil, vinegar, biscuit, cheese, etc., but the country around abounded in maize, cocoanuts, bananas, pineapples, and various kinds of wines and beers. Then there was almost no limit to the great variety of fish in these parts; the shoals were so thick along the river-banks sometimes that they could be dipped out with little nets, or they even leaped out of the water onto the dry land and could be picked up. The Admiral would conciliate

the natives by kind words and presents. These would then render the infant colony what aid they could.

“All things were now settled for the Christian colony,” says Fernando Columbus, “and ten or twelve houses built and thatched, and the Admiral ready to sail for Spain, when he fell into greater danger for want of water than he had been before by the inundation; for, the great rains of January being over, the mouth of the river was so choked up with sand that whereas when they came in there was about ten feet of water, which was scant enough, when we would have gone out there were not two feet, so that we were shut up without any help, it being impossible to get the ships over the sand; and though there had been such a contrivance, the sea was so boisterous that the least wave which beat upon the shore was enough to break the ships in pieces, especially ours, which were at this time like a honeycomb, being all worm-eaten through and through.”¹

Meanwhile, the Quibian of Veragua had no intention of allowing himself to be robbed of this rich territory by the strangers thus attempting to plant themselves. Under the pretence of making war with a neighboring enemy, he assembled about a thousand of his painted warriors. He had never yet smelt gunpowder nor felt the keen edge of that product of civilization—*steel*. Blindly he hoped to rout these intruders with a single stroke.

But Diego Mendez, a stout-hearted, sharp-eyed companion of Columbus in his four voyages, noticed so many Indians passing on the way to the Quibian's

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter xvii.

headquarters that his suspicions were aroused. The very impersonation of fidelity to his master, he volunteered his service for an investigation. Starting with a few comrades for the Indian camp, he met the warrior host on their way to the Belen. Springing ashore alone from his boat, he began to communicate cordially with them. They gave him to understand that they were going against a neighboring tribe, and he offered to go with them and aid in the fight. This they declined, and, seeing that they were watched, returned to Veragua. Diego Mendez reported his suspicions to the Admiral, but he was unwilling to make the first attack on the savages and so awaken the bitter enmities of warfare.

The bold Mendez will once more spy out the camp of these painted warriors, then, taking with him a single companion. Rodrigo de Escobar accompanies him, and they follow the coast afoot to the Quibian's camp. At the mouth of the Veragua they meet two canoes from another part, who do not hesitate to say that the warriors had been on their way for the destruction of the colony, and had turned back because they thought themselves suspected. Very soon they would be on their way again with a stronger force. Mendez will go to the bottom of the matter. Will not these canoes take him to the Quibian's headquarters? Oh, no; this would be sure death! Mendez insists; he will make them a present. They will go, then, wherever he wishes.

The Indian village was scattered along the river-bank, amidst trees and groves, the Quibian's house being on the commanding site of a little hill. On every

hand round about, armed warriors frowned on the two white men, who passed on fearlessly among them. As they were about to climb the hill to the Quibian's house, the Indians opposed them. The chieftain had been wounded in a recent battle, they said, and could not see them. But for that very reason Mendez must see him, for he is a surgeon and can cure him. Being a surgeon, and handing out a few presents, he may pass. Around the large space in front of the Quibian's house were the trophies of recent warfare—three hundred ghastly human heads were impaled on stakes in the most orderly manner. All undismayed, the two brave whites passed on to the door, when a crowd of gaping women and children there assembled shrieked and screamed and fled in terror. At this alarm a brawny son of the chieftain sallied forth and dealt Mendez a blow that sent him backward several steps, who, recovering himself, showed a box of ointment and urged his services as a surgeon, all to no purpose. The youth was in a rage and pushed him back. Meanwhile a crowd of enraged Indians were rushing to the spot. Mendez jerked out of his pocket a comb and a pair of scissors, and giving them to Escobar urged him to cut and trim his hair. The superstitious savages held their breath at the novel sight. Without loss of time, Mendez gave the chief's son a looking-glass, in which he, with great surprise, beheld for the first time his own face. Escobar cut and combed his hair also. Now Mendez gave comb, brush, and looking-glass to the savage, and asked for something to eat and drink. The request was granted and all became friends. Mendez returned, fully convinced that the Indians were on the war-path.

This was soon confirmed by a native of the vicinity, who had become strongly attached to the white men and had gained clew to the intentions of his countrymen. The Quibian was planning to burn the ships and houses at dead of night, massacring all the Spaniards. Houses and ships were at once put under a strong guard, and a council of war was held. There was no time to lose.

With the rapidity of a Napoleon Bonaparte, the adelantado has taken his resolution and is on the way for carrying it out. He will take seventy-four well-armed men, Mendez and the Indian interpreter included, and, on the 30th of March, go as rapidly as possible to the chieftain's camp.

The Quibian sees the crowd coming and sends a messenger warning them away from the house, more from jealousy of his women, however, than from fear of war. The adelantado goes on alone, having cautiously disposed his men. Another messenger meets him and requests him not to enter the house. The Quibian will come out, sick though he be. They meet at the door. The adelantado is very affable and converses cordially through his trembling interpreter. They talk about this fine country. But that wound!—the adelantado will examine it—so softly—strokes it gently. Now the chieftain is completely off his guard. This stranger, all alone, is so friendly; and he has full fifty people in his house and many hundreds just outside. Don Bartholomew tightens his grasp, and his faithful Mendez, on the sharp lookout, fires his arquebus, while four Spaniards near by rush forward. The Quibian, somewhat weakened by his wound, strug-

gles in the tremendous grasp of the adelantado. But all the Spaniards are upon him. He and his household—some fifty persons, big and small—are all bound and hurried off without shedding a drop of blood.

But hear those poor savages! They rend the air with their lamentations, for their hearts are breaking at seeing their chief a captive. They plead for his release, offering for his ransom an immense treasure which they say is in the woods near by. But the adelantado is inexorable. This dangerous chieftain and his household must be held as hostages for the peaceable behavior of the rest. They are sent to the ships for safe-keeping, while the adelantado and the main body of his force are to scour the surrounding country for those who have escaped.

Who shall take charge of this redoubtable chieftain and conduct him to the ships this dark night? Juan Sanchez, chief pilot of the squadron, an honest, brave sailor, volunteers his services. The Quibian is bound tightly hand and foot and fastened firmly to the seat of the boat. "Look well to your charges," urges the adelantado. "Pluck out my beard hair by hair if I let him escape," replied Sanchez as he pushed off his boat from the bank. Every muscle of the Quibian's face is calm, but a fierce fire burns within. He and his household are captives—made so in the twinkling of an eye! What next? The river runs fast—so does time. Juan Sanchez's honest face beams self-complacently, kindly, in the light of the torch. The shrewd savage makes an appeal. These cords are so tight—hurt badly! Sanchez rows on. But by the time they approach the mouth of the river his heart is

touched, for, beneath the rough surface, the sailor has a tender spot. He loosens the cords, unties the captive from the bench, and holds the rope's end in his firm grasp. The Quibian seems cool and motionless and emotionless as a statue, but his eyes are on the pilot. Sanchez turns his eyes away and hears something like a rock splash in the water—the boat tips and he is well-nigh precipitated into the river! The rope is out of his hand and the Indian is gone. Look out! Others of the captives may follow. In the darkness and bustle, they have all they can do to keep guard over the rest. In the inky river the Quibian, shackles and all, has made good his escape. Juan Sanchez may make his report to the Admiral and pull out his beard!

“The next day,” says Fernando, “the lieutenant perceiving the country was very mountainous and woody, and that there were no regular towns, but one house here and another at a great distance, and that it would be very difficult to pursue the Indians from place to place, he resolved to return to the ships with his men, not one of them being either killed or wounded. He presented the Admiral with the plunder of Quibian's house, worth about 300 ducats in gold plates, little eagles, and small quills which they string and wear about their arms and legs, and in gold twists which they put about their head in the nature of a coronet. All which things, deducting only the fifth part for their Catholic Majesties, he divided among those that went upon the expedition; and to the lieutenant, in token of victory, was given one of those crowns or coronets above mentioned.”

Columbus now flattered himself that the colony might be left in security. The Quibian had indeed escaped ; but how could he, with hands and feet tied, have ever reached the shore ? And even if he were living, would not the detention of his family on the ships compel him to keep the peace ? But this savage chieftain, having reached the shore in safety, was a genuine hero, who instead of being subdued by what he had suffered was only thereby rendered the more determined and fierce. Gathering a great number of his warriors, they stole upon the frail cabins of the little colony, under cover of the dense forest and with the noiseless step of the Indian on a still hunt. The Spaniards, thinking their enemies subdued, were completely off their guard. Some were in their cabins, some in the *Gallego* in the harbor, and the greater number were on the beach gazing wistfully after the Admiral's ships, about to depart. Startled almost out of their wits by the wild and deafening yells sent up by the infuriated savages as they broke from the forest directly upon them, there was no protection to the little cabins covered with palm-leaves. The dense shower of arrows riddled them completely and wounded those within. The Spaniards rushed for their arms. The adelantado and some seven of his comrades seized their lances and targets, and calling on the rest to follow rushed upon the Indians as they emerged from the woods. In all there were about twenty to bear up under the shock ; but their shields protected them, while the naked bodies of the savages were exposed not only to the sword and the lance, but to the fangs of an infuriated bloodhound. The Indians fell back

into the forest, sending showers of arrows from behind the trees, and ever and anon rushing out into close conflict with their wooden lances. After three hours of this warfare, amidst deafening yells, and in which all the Spaniards on the spot fought desperately, they had one killed and seven wounded, among which latter was the adelantado, who was pierced in the breast by a lance. The savages fled to the forest, leaving quite a number dead on the field.

Diego Tristan, one of the Admiral's captains, arrived with a boat during the conflict, having been sent up the river for a supply of fresh water. He looked on, but took no part in the fight, saying that if he should approach the shore the terrified Spaniards might rush in and swamp his boat. The skirmish over, he proceeded up the river amidst the lurking Indians. When warned of his danger, he replied that he should perform the duty for which he had been sent.

The deep river was walled up on both sides by a forest so dense that it was about impossible to land, except where the path of the fisherman came out, or the constant hauling up of the canoes had made an opening. When the boat had advanced about a league above the settlement, to where the river was narrow and full and the tall spreading trees on each bank formed a magnificent arcade, the Spaniards were suddenly surprised by the terrific yells and horrid couch-blasts of the savages, who burst upon them in every direction. From the shadowy nooks and from under the overhanging bows numberless canoes darted forth, each moved by a single paddle, while several warriors

standing in it shot arrows and hurled lances. All this must be met by eight sailors and three soldiers, who, completely terrified by the deafening noise and overwhelmed by numbers, lost all presence of mind, and, dropping both oars and firearms, simply tried to cover themselves with their shields. Tristan fought bravely, notwithstanding a number of wounds received, and was doing his utmost to animate his men when a swift Indian javelin pierced his right eye and he expired. The canoes closed in upon the boat and massacred the Spaniards to a man. Juan de Noya, who had been knocked overboard during the conflict, swam under water, landed under the overhanging thicket, and reached the Spanish encampment, to terrify them with an account of the sickening scene.

The intelligence created a complete panic. How could their reduced numbers withstand these fierce hordes? If the Admiral should sail away without them, they would either starve to death—for they dared not venture out for food—or they would be massacred by infuriated savages. They would at once board the caravel in the harbor and escape. The adelantado remonstrated, but in vain; they would abandon the place.

But the escape was not so easy as they imagined. The swollen river having subsided, the surf had again banked up the sand at the mouth and rendered the bar impassable. They attempted to go out to the Admiral in a boat, but were prevented by the wind and the breakers. Thus shut in to the mercy of the savages, they were still further horrified by the disfigured corpses of Tristan and his men floating down

stream amidst hungry fishes, and stranding on the beach as food for vultures. Did not this portend their own fate but near at hand? Meanwhile the natives had grown jubilant over their successes. Their horrid yells and the thunder of their conchs and wooden drums made the thick forests frightful in every direction. Abandoning the settlement, the adelantado raised a bulwark around an open place on the bank of the river. Here, sheltered by chests, casks, and the boat of the caravel, they plied two small cannon through openings in the barricade, and thus kept the savages at a safe distance. But what could they do when their ammunition became exhausted?

On board the Admiral's ships matters were scarcely less appalling. Ten days had passed since Tristan left. Why did he not return? What if their ships' cables should part in this rough sea? Those clumsy caravels would surely be swamped. Then those Indians!—the Quibian's family, confined in the hold of the Admiral's ship—they seemed to be enthused with the spirit of the chief himself. One night while the guards were sleeping on the hatch—it being so high up that it was not thought necessary to chain it down—they collected boxes, casks, and the stones used for ballast, and, piling them up, mounted them, and with one tremendous lift shoulder to shoulder in concert they tossed the sleeping guard hither and thither, and springing out and into the sea they made their escape. Those kept back and chained down under the hatch were found dead the next morning. Some had hung themselves from the roof of their dungeon, and those who could not secure this conven-

ience strangled themselves by fastening one end of the cord to the foot.

Communication with those on the shore was now absolutely necessary, Colonization at present was not to be thought of. When the natives should learn the fate of this royal family, "they would move the very rocks to revenge." But what boat might pass that raging surf? Now Pedro Ledesma, a pilot from Seville, steps forward and offers to swim through it if some one will row him up to the breakers. If those savages could swim a league to save their lives, he might pass through the surf for the relief of so many companions. The perilous feat was accomplished. Ledesma crawled up the beach from the merciless waves to listen to the shocking fate of Tristan, and the determination of the colony to leave the place. They were simply desperate. They were busy digging out canoes to carry them to the ships outside the bar as soon as the storm should abate. Ledesma must importune the Admiral for them that he might not sail away and leave them on this savage coast. Should he refuse to take them they would drag the caravel across the bar when the storm was over, and take their chances at sea for Spain.

Again Ledesma braved the breakers, and entering the boat in waiting for him bore to the Admiral the sad tidings of the colony. Throughout this entire voyage the Admiral had been simply a suffering invalid. This seemed the crisis of his hopes. He had been unjustly deprived of his authority at Hispaniola. Now he had hoped to reinstate himself in a still better country. Must he fail again? But he could not leave his brother

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in a mutinous colony, among savages. He would gladly have remained himself, but who then might convey the intelligence of this important discovery to the sovereigns? For the present his enterprise of colonization must be abandoned, but by and by it might be undertaken, perhaps.

Meanwhile his worm-eaten ships, on a lee shore, in a storm, were in imminent peril. A small addition of force to the present storm might drive them into the breakers. What wonder if, in these days of constant worry of mind and nights of sleepless anxiety, this aged spirit, broken by hardships, disappointments, and outrage, should fall into delirium—happily a religious delirium! He says: “At length, groaning with exhaustion, I fell asleep and heard a compassionate voice address me thus: ‘O fool, and slow to believe and serve thy God, the God of all; what did He do more for Moses, or for David, his servant, than He has done for thee? From thine infancy He has kept thee under His constant and watchful care. When He saw thee arrived at an age which suited His designs respecting thee, He brought wonderful renown to thy name throughout all the land. He gave thee for thine own the Indies, which form so rich a portion of the world, and thou hast divided them as it pleased thee, for He gave thee power to do so. He gave thee the keys of those barriers of the ocean-sea which were closed with such mighty chains, and thou wast obeyed through many lands and gained an honorable fame throughout Christendom. What more did the Most High do for the people of Israel when He brought them out of Egypt; or for David, whom, a shepherd, He made to be a King in Judea? Turn to Him and ac-

knowledge thine error—His mercy is infinite. Thine old age shall not prevent thee from accomplishing any great undertaking. He holds under His sway the greatest possessions. Abraham had exceeded a hundred years of age when he begat Isaac; nor was Sarah young. Thou criest out for uncertain help; answer, who has afflicted thee so much and so often, God or the world? The privileges promised by God He never fails in bestowing; nor does He ever declare, after a service has been rendered Him, that such was not agreeable with His intention, or that He had regarded the matter in another light; nor does He inflict suffering in order to give effect to the manifestation of His power. His acts answer to His words, and it is His custom to perform all His promises with interest. Thus I have told you what the Creator has done for thee, and what He does for all men. Even now He partially shows thee the reward of so many toils and dangers incurred by thee in the service of others.'

"I heard all of this as it were in a trance; but I had no answer to give in definite words, and could but weep for my errors. He who spoke to me, whoever it was, concluded by saying: 'Fear not, trust; all these tribulations are recorded on marble, and not without cause.'"

Critics and scoffers have exercised themselves greatly at the expense of this "*vision*" of Columbus. The more credulous have seen in it a divine disclosure. To us it seems exceedingly natural that this devout man, broken down with age and extreme hardships, tortured with physical sufferings and borne down with anxiety, should fall into just this sort of reverie. The order of thought is simply a reflex of the facts of his life in the

light of a true Christian faith slightly tinged with the superstitions of the time. If it were a dream, it was most natural, and according to the credulousness of the time might easily be mistaken for a vision. If it were a divine disclosure, it would readily fall into line with other widely accepted facts on the divine side of human history. In the final elucidation of all things, stranger facts may be discovered than that Columbus was chosen of God for a special purpose; that he was providentially fitted and divinely inspired for the main points of his great achievement.

It had now become clear to all that the maintenance of the colony was impossible. As soon as the protracted storm subsided a vigorous effort gathered all together for the homeward voyage. As the caravel *Gallego* could not be brought out from the river, she was emptied and dismantled. This work was put in charge of the energetic Diego Mendez. Out of the sails of the caravel he made sacks for carrying the biscuit; the spars were lashed across two large canoes, and on these a platform was laid, thus making a safe raft. On this was placed provisions, arms, ammunition, the furniture of the caravel, etc., which was then towed out to the ships by means of row-boats. The wine, oil, and vinegar casks were thrown into the water and drawn after by means of ropes. As all were anxious to get away from this dangerous coast, every one worked with a will, and in two days, by means of seven trips, everything had been transported to the ships awaiting the return. The mere hull of the *Gallego*, thoroughly riddled by the teredo, remained in the river. The faithful Mendez, having worked day and night, was the last to leave the shore.

No language could portray the delight of these sailors on once more finding themselves all together and on board the ships for home. Gladly would they meet the perils of the sea on their homeward voyage if they might thus put the ocean between them and that land of death. In recognition of the faithful services of Diego Mendez in getting to sea, Columbus gave him charge of the ship vacated by the death of Diego Tristan.

The squadron sailed from Veragua in the last days of April. The worm-eaten, weather-worn ships, the weary, enervated crews, and the scanty supply of provisions forbade their course to Spain. They must find their haven in Hispaniola. But why did the Admiral go coasting along to the eastward? Why did he not strike out due north to the point in view? Surely he must be sailing directly for Spain. So thought the pilots; and they were much annoyed at such presumption, with almost nothing in the larder, and the water almost pouring in through worm-holes nearly the bigness of a finger. But the Admiral and his lieutenant were too well versed in the knowledge of these seas to start directly north, and be carried far west out of their course by the current setting in so firmly from the east. Then, why should the former give the results of his work away? Behold how many were ready waiting to follow in the wake of his discoveries, and gather the results and profits of his toils and sufferings! Let the route be as obscure as possible. So he even took the charts from his sailors.

At Puerto Bello he was obliged to abandon one of

his ships, the *Biscaina*, as she could no longer be kept afloat, and the other two were so worm-eaten that it was all the men could do to pump and bail the water out as fast as it came in. Still the ships stood to the east, past Port Retrete, the Mulatos, and Point Bloss to the Gulf of Darien. This large sheet of water making in beyond the horizon was so suggestive of the much-sought-for "*strail*" that the Admiral was strongly tempted to continue in search of it; but on holding a council with his officers he found their opposition on account of the condition of the ships and the supplies so forcible that he turned the prows northward for Hispaniola. This was May 1st, and they were ten leagues farther east than they had been before.

Not only the currents but also the winds were strong from the east, and the Admiral bore up close to the wind. This annoyed his men, who declared they were running to the east of the Caribbees, but he doubted if they would even reach Hispaniola, which fear proved to be true, for on the 10th he approached the Cayman Islands, west of Jamaica. Passing by the tortoises which fairly swarmed and looked like little rocks in these parts, the ships reached the Queen's Gardens, south of Cuba, May 30th. Here they cast anchor some ten leagues from the main island. The crews were fairly exhausted, and the provisions reduced to a few biscuit and a little oil and vinegar—poor diet for men laboring incessantly at the pumps. A fearful tempest arose; three anchors were lost. The bow of the *Bermuda* was driven fiercely into the stern of the Admiral's ship, which now had but one anchor.

At daylight the cable was nearly parted. One hour more of darkness and he would have been driven onto the rocks.

The storm having lasted nearly a week, Columbus weighed anchor for Hispaniola, his "people dismayed and downhearted, almost all his anchors lost, and his vessels bored as full of holes as a honeycomb." Laboring against wind and current, he finally reached Cape Cruz.

Having obtained cassava-bread from the Indians, and waited on the wind a few days, he tried again to buffet the winds and currents to Hispaniola, but all in vain. The scene is most disheartening. The ill-fated and worn-out sailors ply the pumps and bail with buckets and kettles, but still the water gains on them. Even the Admiral gives up and makes for the north side of Jamaica, for the vessels are in danger of sinking even before they reach that shore. On the 24th of June they run the ships aground, side by side, about a "bow-shot" from the land. Here they shore them up and build pavilions on the decks, for the holds of the vessels are almost filled with water. Everything is put in the best possible state of defence, and the men are not allowed to go ashore lest they should commit some outrage against the natives, and so prevent commerce or bring on an attack. Two persons are appointed to carry on the trade, and a careful distribution of supplies is made every evening.

The Indians soon swarmed about the harbor, and were quite inclined to trade. Fernando says they "sold two *utias*, which are little creatures like rabbits, for a bit of tin, and cakes of bread they call *sabi* for

two or three red or yellow glass beads ; and when they brought a quantity of anything, they had a hawk's bell, and sometimes we gave a cacique or great man a little looking-glass or red cap or a pair of scissors to please them. This good order kept the men plentifully supplied with provisions, and the Indians were well pleased with our company."

Still the provisions were often inadequate, and as the Indians kept no great supply on hand the colony might at any time be reduced to want. It was evident something must be done to communicate with Hispaniola. Should they try to build a ship for that purpose? Alas! they had neither tools nor workmen to construct anything which might stem the headwinds and the currents. Was there any hope that some ship might pass that way? Scarcely. After many councils held by the Admiral with his men, there was but one plan to be commended—that some one should go to Hispaniola in a canoe.

Diego Mendez went on an excursion through a great part of the island, purchased and shipped provisions for the crews, and had cultivated such friendships with the different caciques that they had agreed to trade regularly with an agent sent out by the Admiral. With knives, combs, beads, hawk's bells, and fish-hooks he might purchase utias, fish, and cassava-bread. Having sent back his men one by one loaded with provisions, he continued on with two Indians, one to carry his provisions and the other his hammock, till he came to the eastern extremity of the island. Here the cacique, one of the most powerful in Jamaica, was completely won by the spirited

address and taking manners of Mendez, and became so friendly as to exchange names in token of brotherhood. The cacique was readily pledged to furnish provisions for the ships, and for a brass helmet, a shirt, and a short frock sold Mendez an excellent canoe, which forthwith came back laden with provisions. Loud were the acclamations of his comrades on his return, and the Admiral embraced him most cordially. The Spaniards had been literally fasting. "There was not a loaf left in the ships," says Mendez. Henceforth provisions came regularly.

"Ten days after this," says Mendez, "the Admiral called me aside and spoke to me of the great peril he was in, addressing me as follows: 'Diego Mendez, my son, not one of those whom I have here with me has any idea of the great danger in which we stand, except myself and you, for we are but few in number, and these wild Indians are numerous and very fickle and capricious, and whenever they may take it in their heads to come and burn us in our two ships, which we have made into straw-thatched cabins, they may easily do so by setting fire to them on the land side, and so destroy us all. The arrangements which you have made with them for the supply of food, to which they agreed with such good-will, may soon prove disagreeable to them, and it would not be surprising if, on the morrow, they were not to bring us anything at all; in such case we are not in a position to take it by main force, but shall be compelled to accede to their terms. I have thought of a remedy, if you consider it advisable, which is that some one should go out in the canoe that you have purchased, and make his

way in it to Española, to purchase a vessel with which we may escape from the extremely dangerous position in which we now are. 'Tell me your opinion.' To which I answered: 'My lord, I distinctly see the danger in which we stand, which is much greater than would be readily imagined. With respect to the passage from this island to Española in so small a vessel as a canoe, I look upon it not merely as difficult, but impossible, for I know not who would venture to encounter so terrific a danger as to cross a gulf of forty leagues of sea, and amongst islands where the sea is most impetuous and scarcely ever at rest.'

"His lordship did not agree with the opinion that I expressed, but adduced strong arguments to show that I was the person to undertake the enterprise. To which I replied: 'My lord, I have many times put my life in danger to save yours and the lives of all those who are with you, and God has marvellously preserved me; in consequence of this, there have not been wanting murmurers who have said that your lordship entrusts every honorable undertaking to me, while there are others amongst them who would perform them as well as I. My opinion is, therefore, that your lordship would do well to summon all the men, and lay this business before them, to see if, amongst them all, there is one who will volunteer to take it, which I certainly doubt, and if all refuse I will risk my life in your service, as I have done many times already.'

"On the following day his lordship caused all the men to appear together before him, and then opened

the matter to them in the same manner as he had done to me. When they heard it they were all silent, until some said that it was out of the question to speak of such a thing, for it was impossible, in so small a craft, to cross a boisterous and perilous gulf of forty leagues breadth, and to pass between those two islands, where very strong vessels had been lost in going to make discoveries, not being able to encounter the force and fury of the currents. I then arose and said: 'My lord, I have but one life, and I am willing to hazard it in the service of your lordship and for the welfare of all those who are here with us; for I trust in God that, in consideration of the motive which actuates me, He will give me deliverance, as He has already done on many other occasions.' When the Admiral heard my determination he arose and embraced me, and, kissing me on the cheek, said: 'Well did I know that there was no one here but yourself who would dare to undertake this enterprise; I trust in God, our Lord, that you will come out of it victoriously, as you have done in the others which you have undertaken.'

"On the following day I drew my canoe onto the shore, fixed a false keel on it, and pitched and greased it. I then nailed some boards upon the poop and prow to prevent the sea from coming in, as it was liable to do from the lowness of the gunwales; I also fixed a mast in it, set up a sail, and laid in the necessary provisions for myself, one Spaniard, and six Indians, making eight in all, which was as many as the canoe would hold. I then bade farewell to his lordship and all others, and proceeded along the

coast of Jamaica, up to the extremity of the island, which was thirty-five leagues from the point whence we started."

Here they went ashore, and, waiting for the sea to become smooth, were wandering about rather uncircumspectly, when a crowd of savages falling upon them took them prisoners and hurried them away into the woods. Here it was decided to put the Spaniards to death, but a quarrel having sprung up respecting a division of the spoils, while the question was being settled by some game of chance, Mendez got into his canoe and made his escape. Aided by the rapid current, he was back again in the presence of the Admiral just fifteen days after leaving.

Nothing daunted, he was ready to start again, provided a sufficient guard of men might accompany him to the extremity of the island and protect him till he could get away. The number in this adventure was now doubled. In addition to the six Spaniards and ten Indians in the canoe commanded by Mendez, another canoe manned in like manner was assigned to Bartholomew Fiesco, a brave Genoese, who had commanded the *Biscaina*. When these brave men reached Hispaniola, Fiesco was to return to Jamaica with intelligence of their safe arrival, while Mendez was to proceed to Spain bearing the Admiral's messages to the sovereigns.

Very cheerfully, indeed, did the little company embark, the Indians laying in their frugal supply of cassava-bread, roots, and calabashes filled with water. To this simple fare the Spaniards added some meat of the utia, and took their swords and bucklers. The

adelantado went along the shore with seventy well-armed men. Three days they waited at the eastern end of the island for the sea to become calm. After they had launched, the adelantado waited till night, and watched the canoes till they disappeared in the horizon. Frail barks, these, for such a sea! When they were loaded they were not a span above the water.¹ Awkward white men, dressed and in armor, might well dread them in a storm; but the naked Indians were so like fishes in the water that they could easily right a capsized canoe, bail it out with their calabashes, and go on as if nothing had happened.

The first day at sea there was neither wind nor cloud, but the burning rays of the sun reflected by the water were well-nigh insufferable. Every now and then the Indians would jump into the water, and, swimming abreast of the canoes, would cool and refresh themselves. Then the Spaniards would encourage them to row as fast as they could. The Indian had a deft hand at the paddle. All day long the canoes had fairly skipped over the water. At night there was simply sky and water in sight. The crews were divided into watches; one-half slept while the other half worked, the Indians at the paddles and the white men keeping guard with weapon in hand.

The temperature did not fall much with the darkness. All night long it was sultry and oppressive, so that the morning found the crews greatly exhausted. The captains now gave a rest and refreshments, and encouraged the Indians by trying their own hands at

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter ci.

the paddles. But the Indians had brought on a calamity. In the labor and heat of the day before, they had drank up all their water, so that there was now not a drop to moisten their parched lips. By noon they were completely exhausted. Now the captains discovered two small kegs of water which they seem to have reserved for such emergency. Mouthful by mouthful the precious draughts are administered, especially to the suffering, toiling Indians. These were, moreover, encouraged by the assurance that they would soon reach the little island Navasa, which lay directly in their course, eight leagues this side of Hispaniola. Slowly and wearily the day passed away, and when the sun sank into the ocean there was still no sight of land, nor yet so much as a cloud in the horizon to delude them. According to the reckoning kept by the captains, the island should now have been in sight. Could it be that they were out of their course and might even miss Hispaniola? As the night closed about them they despaired of touching at Navasa. An island so small and low could only be met by chance in the darkness. And the gloom thickened when one of the suffering and exhausted Indians died and was dropped into the sea. Others, faint and gasping, lay stretched out on the canoe-bottoms, and those who continued their toiling were so consumed by thirst that they would even sip the brine from the sea.

Finally, the last drop had been drained from the casks. The night was far advanced, but even those whose turn entitled them to rest could not sleep for anxiety and thirst. One by one the paddles ceased.

All had given up in despair of reaching Hispaniola. Mendez stood watching the horizon, in which the coming moon glimmered faintly. As the silver edge emerged it defined a small rocky landscape. "Land!" he cried, and the sound brought life to every heart. There was Navasa!—but such a mere bit of land-line against the sky that, had it not been on the bright face of the moon, no eye could have detected it. The weariness of the rowers and the strength of the current had thrown the captains off their reckoning.

Hope brought new strength to every muscle. Again the canoes are pushed against the current, and in the gray dawn the crews leap on shore and give thanks to God. They hurry about over the island, about a mile and a half in circuit. There is not a tree, nor a bush, nor even a bit of grass. All is rock, unbroken by stream or spring. But in the hollows of the rock is an abundance of rain-water, partially cooled by the night. Dipping it up with their calabashes, they drank to their peril. The Spaniards restrain themselves with something of reason, but the poor famished Indians simply abandon themselves to the momentary relief, some of them dying on the spot and others falling painfully ill.

Oviedo says that not far from this island there gushes up in the midst of the sea a fountain of pure, fresh water, so copious as to sweeten the surface all around. But the poor famished boatmen knew it not.

Their thirst assuaged, they look for food. Along the shore-line, among the weeds, they find some shell-fish thrown up by the tide. Kindling a fire with the drift-wood picked up here and there, they roast and eat them with the keen relish of fatigue and hunger. Then they

rest on the rocks and feast their eyes on the beatific vision of Hispaniola, its purple mountains and exuberant reaches of landscape stretching along the horizon, eight leagues away.

In the cool of the evening they again commit themselves to the sea and reach the western end of Hispaniola the next day, the fourth since leaving Jamaica. Here, on the banks of the beautiful river and abundantly refreshed by the kindly natives, they rest and recuperate for two days. The faithful Fiesco would have returned at once to Jamaica, according to the Admiral's directions, but both Spaniards and natives were so horrified by the toils and sufferings of the passage that they could not be induced to accompany him. Mendez, though suffering from a fever, taking six Indians, set out in his canoe for San Domingo, a distance of one hundred and thirty leagues.

Having toiled against the currents for eighty leagues, he learned that Ovando, the governor, was in Xaragua, fifty miles in the interior. Abandoning his canoe and going alone on foot through forests and over mountains, he arrived at Xaragua, "achieving one of the most perilous expeditions," says Irving, "ever undertaken by a devoted follower for the safety of his commander."

Now that such an herculean effort has been made to bring the tidings of the disaster of the Admiral at Jamaica to the governor's ears, what is the result? Surely he will move heaven and earth to bring relief to the acute sufferings and imminent perils of one who has been rendering the most important services to his nation and to the world. Certainly, Ovando professes great concern at the sad plight of Columbus, and makes

all sorts of promises of sending immediate relief, but the days, the weeks, and the months pass, and nothing whatever in the way of relief is attempted. Mendez gives us to understand that the governor was at this very time busying himself with slaughtering the beautiful and hospitable natives of Xaragua—massacring chiefs, people, men, women, and children, in the most indiscriminate manner.

Of the debauched classes of Spanish grandees—to a great extent associates of Roldan in his rebellion—who had settled in that lovely part of the island, and taxed the natives to till their soil and carry them on their backs, some had told Ovando that a rebellion was being concocted by Anacaona and her caciques. No proofs of the said rebellion ever became tangible, but the governor was completely taken by the insinuations, and forthwith set himself to cure it in the most summary manner. With three hundred foot-soldiers, bearing swords, cross-bows, and arquebuses, and seventy horsemen, well protected by cuirass, lance, and buckler, he is going into Xaragua. Strangely enough, he is thus going to visit the Queen Anacaona, who since the death of her brother, Behechio, has been recognized as ruler over the natives in this lovely province. Meanwhile he will adjust the tribute in these parts. Anacaona, notwithstanding all she has suffered from these intruding white men, will still make the most of them. Having notified all her subordinate chiefs and principal subjects to assemble, she goes out to meet Ovando and his army.

It is a truly spirited and beautiful procession, according to the custom of showing homage by this generous people. Here are not only scores of chiefs and strong

and handsome men generally, but beautiful women and maidens, moving in the most spirited and graceful manner, as they sing their areytos, or national ballads. The maidens are waving their palm branches and dancing as charmingly as when they first met the Spaniards led by Don Bartholomew.

When the procession enters Anacaona's town, she assigns the governor her largest house, and comfortably quarters his men in other houses around him. For days they are feasted on all the good things of the province. The games, the songs, and the dances go on for their amusement. Surely there is nothing like rebellion in all this, nor have historians ever discovered any evidences of it. But unprincipled, would-be informants are still credited, and without any proper investigation Ovando proceeds upon the worst possible suppositions, and that in the most treacherous manner conceivable. He will now take his turn and amuse and entertain these natives, who have fairly outdone themselves for his pleasure. What could be more fitting for this purpose than that chivalrous joust with reeds, learned from the Moors of Granada by the Spaniards? One Sunday afternoon, on the public square and in front of the house assigned Ovando in this Indian town, the Spanish cavalrymen assemble. They are remarkable for their skilful manœuvres and the gay trappings of their fine horses. Aye, there is one steed which can so prance and curvet as to literally keep time to the viol! But these horsemen have also other weapons, sharper than reeds, and the footmen, ostensibly mere spectators, are also to be well armed, and all must act at a concerted signal.

The hour appointed arrives, and the square is crowded with natives on tiptoe curiosity to see the games. The caciques are crowded into Ovando's house, which overlooks the square. Unsuspecting innocents! Not one of them is armed. Not one has an evil thought. Ovando, who will appear as harmless as a little child, is playing with some of his principal officers at quoits.

The cavalry is prancing on the square. Everything is waiting. The caciques beg the governor to begin the games. Anacaona, too, and her beautiful daughter and beautiful female attendants, all join in the request. Ovando will be obliging, leaves his game and comes forward to a conspicuous place and gives the deadly signal—took hold of a piece of gold hanging from his neck, some say; or, as others say, laid his hand on the Alcantaron cross embroidered on his fine clothes. The trumpet sounds. The soldiers under regular command, at once surround the house in which are Anacaona and the chiefs. These latter are all tied to the posts supporting the roof, while the queen is led out a prisoner. Hark! the caciques are shrieking under the most terrible tortures! At the very extremity of anguish, they are betrayed into a false accusation of the queen and of themselves as to the supposed plot.

This is enough. No regular examination is needed. A torch is put to the inflammable structure, and the cries of the unhappy chiefs rise above the raging flames. Meanwhile, a most shocking massacre is going on among the people. The horsemen are rushing through the crowds of shrieking men, women,

and children—defenceless and naked. Swords are hacking and cutting right and left, the spears are transfixing the strong, the infirm, and the little innocent, while steel-clad hoofs trample down indiscriminately. If perchance a Spaniard, more humane than the rest, catch up a little innocent, which appeals to his heart, and is about to bear it away, some one more demoniacal thrusts a lance through it.

Turning pale with dismay at such butchering, we should refuse credence if we were not compelled to accept the testimony of such a venerable personage as Las Casas, who was on the scene of action at the time. Diego Mendez, who was then in Xaragua, and probably a witness of the scene, says incidentally in his will that the number of caciques either burnt or hanged was eighty-four. Las Casas gives eighty as the number in the house. The slaughter of the people was general and well-nigh complete. The few who escaped—some of them in canoes to a neighboring island—were brought back and condemned to slavery. The beautiful and generous Anacaona was taken to San Domingo in chains, and, on the strength of the confession enforced by the most terrific tortures, was publicly hanged like the vilest criminal. Such was the final reward of this beautiful and highly accomplished native princess by those she had always befriended in the most remarkable and even unaccountable manner.

This shocking massacre was not enough to satisfy the bloodthirstiness of Ovando and his minions. For six months the governor's horse and foot continued to scour the forests and mountains in search of those who tried to escape. When the poor terrified creatures were found

secreted in dens of the mountains they were dragged forth and hanged in the most summary manner as incorrigible rebels. In commemoration of this great slaughter—*ostensibly a victory*—Ovando founded a town called St. Mary of the True Peace! That such deeds of cruelty could have been perpetrated in the sincerity of good faith seems incredible. Such was the wise and humane government which succeeded that of the Admiral.

While all this innocent blood was being shed, which continued through the greater part of a year, Columbus might lie on his back beneath the palm-leaf canopy on his worm-eaten ships, sweltering under a tropical sun, twinging with the gout, half starved, and harassed by the most unreasonable and cruel rebellions!

The last word of the previous paragraph is the keynote to the next incident in the experience of Columbus at Jamaica—the rebellion of the Porrás brothers. It must be borne in mind that no tidings whatever had arrived as to the canoe-voyage of Mendez and Fiesco to Hispaniola. Meanwhile, many of those on the thatched wrecks fell sick, some in consequence of the unparalleled hardships of the voyage, and some because of the lack of their wonted provisions, especially wine and flesh; for the Spaniards could not readily adapt themselves to the light vegetable diet of the Indians. Then, too, the depression of mind incident to their deplorable situation must have told heavily on the nerves and tissues of the healthiest bodies. And what could have been more favorable to the development of a mutinous spirit than the uninterrupted idleness necessitated by the situation?

Very soon mutterings arose here and there. "The Admiral would return into Spain no more, because their Catholic Majesties had turned him off, nor much less to Hispaniola, where he had been refused admittance at his coming from Spain, and that he had sent those in the canoes into Spain to solicit his own affairs, and not to bring ships or other succors, and that he designed, whilst they were soliciting their Catholic Majesties, to stay there to fulfil his banishment, for otherwise Bartholomew Fiesco had been come back by this time, as was given out he was to do. Besides, they knew not whether he and James Mendez were drowned by the way, which, if it had happened, they should never be relieved if they did not take care for it themselves, since the Admiral did not seem to look to it for the reasons aforesaid, and because of the gout, which had so seized all his limbs that he could scarce stir in his bed, much less undergo the fatigue and danger of going over to Hispaniola in canoes."¹ Then, too, they would better come to a resolution in this matter while they were well. They might fall sick at any time, and then there would be no such thing as getting away. Nor could the Admiral in his present state of prostration bar their departure. At Hispaniola, where he had so many enemies, they could not fail to be well received, especially since they could report him in so helpless a condition. Once in Spain, Fonseca would make their case good, as would also "Morales, who kept for his mistress the sister of those Porrases, the ringleaders of the mutineers and chief fomenters of the sedition,

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter cii.

who did not doubt but they should be well received by their Catholic Majesties, before whom all the fault would be laid upon the Admiral, as had been done in the affairs of Hispaniola with Roldan; and their Majesties would the rather seize him and take all he had than be obliged to perform all that was agreed upon between them and him.”¹

These Porras brothers, Francisco and Diego, the former made captain of one of the ships, and the latter notary and accountant-general by Columbus, who had been induced to favor them by Morales, the royal treasurer, had been treated like relatives, even when they had proved themselves incapable of filling their several offices. It would seem that those whom the Admiral favored most were most susceptible of ingratitude. On the 2d of January a completely organized mutiny discovered itself. Francisco de Porras came rudely into the cabin on the stern of the caravel, where Columbus lay, a complete cripple from the gout.

“My lord,” said he, in a highly irritated mood, “what is the meaning that you will not go into Spain, and will keep us all here perishing?”

“I do not see how we can get away till those who have gone to Hispaniola in the canoes send us a ship,” said Columbus. “No man can be more desirous of getting away from this place than I am, as well for my own interests as for the good of you all, and I fully realize how accountable I am for the welfare of each one of you. If you have anything to propose, I will readily call the officers together in consultation, as I have more than once done heretofore.”

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter cii.

“It is no time to talk,” replied Porras, brusksly, “but a time to act, and to act promptly, or we may stay here forever.”

And turning his back on the Admiral he said in a loud and defiant voice, “I am for Spain with those who will follow me.” At once his followers began to cry out here and there, “We will go with you,” “We will go with you.” Running about, they “possessed themselves of the forecandle, poop, and roundtops, all in confusion, and crying, ‘Let them die;’ others, ‘For Spain,’ ‘For Spain,’ and others, ‘What shall we do, captain?’ Though the Admiral was then in bed, so lame of the gout that he could not stand, yet he could not forbear rising and stumbling out at this noise. But two or three worthy persons, his servants, laid hold of him and with labor laid him on his bed that the mutineers might not murder him. Then they ran to his brother, who was courageously come out with a half pike in his hand, and, wresting it out of his hands, put him in to his brother, desiring Captain Porras to go about his business and not do some mischief they might all suffer for; that he might be satisfied they did not oppose his going; but if he should kill the Admiral, he could not expect but to be severely punished, without hopes of any benefit.

“The tumult being somewhat appeased, the conspirators took ten canoes that were by the ship’s side, and which the Admiral had bought all about the island, and went aboard them as joyfully as if they had been in some part of Spain. Upon this, many more, who had no hand in the plot, in despair to see themselves, as they thought, forsaken, taking what

they could along with them, went aboard the canoes with them, to the great sorrow and affliction of those few faithful servants who remained with the Admiral, and of all the sick, who thought themselves lost forever, and without hope of ever getting off. And it is certain that had the people been well, not twenty men had remained with the Admiral, who went out to comfort his men with the best words the posture of his affairs would suggest ; and the mutineers, with their captain, Francisco de Porras, in their canoes, went away to the east point of the island.”¹

On their way they did as much mischief as possible. They insulted the natives, taking by force provisions or anything else they wanted, and telling them to go to the Admiral for their pay. If he would not pay them they might put him to death, which, indeed, was the best thing they could do. Was he not hated by the Christians? Had he not been the cause of all the ills suffered by the Indians of Hayti? He would soon treat them in like manner if they did not put him out of the way, for that was his design in staying there.

Having reached the eastern extremity of Jamaica, they set out for Hispaniola as soon as there was a calm, taking Indians to paddle the canoes. But they had miscalculated the weather. Their canoes, too heavily loaded, made poor headway in a rough sea with wind ahead ; they therefore resolved to turn back before they had made four leagues at sea. Then they were not skilful in managing their canoes, and the water coming in over the sides they threw everything overboard but

¹ The above quotations are from Fernando Columbus's *Life of the Admiral*. They are the words of an eye-witness. Chapter cii.

their arms and the provisions needed on the way back. As the wind became stronger their fears increased, and they resolved to murder the Indians and throw them overboard. When they had killed some of these poor natives, others became so terrified that they sprang overboard, trusting to their skill in swimming as a means of escape. But when they became so weary that they caught hold of the sides of the canoes in order to recover their breath, their hands were chopped off and their bodies otherwise wounded. Having thus butchered eighteen, they spared a few to guide the canoes which they themselves could not handle. Such was their treatment of these timorous beings whom they had overpersuaded and coaxed into this perilous voyage.

Having made their way back to Jamaica, they were much divided in opinion as to what it might be best to do. Some were for running over to Cuba and thence putting across to Hispaniola; others proposed going back and making such terms of peace as they could with the Admiral, or, perhaps, taking away from him by force such provisions and arms as he still had, while others preferred to stay where they were till another calm, when they might renew their attempt for a voyage to Hispaniola. This last advice prevailing, they foraged about the neighborhood a month waiting for fair weather; but after two attempts without success, "they set out towards the west from one town to another, with an ill-will, without canoes or any comfort, sometimes eating what they found, and taking it where they could by force, according to their

strength and that of the caciques through whose territories they passed."¹

To return to Columbus: on his worm-eaten, stranded ships, forsaken by nearly all the healthy and available part of his crews, and racked by the pains of exhaustion and acute disease, his most incorrigible and pitiless enemy could scarcely have conceived anything worse for him. What heart could fail to be moved by the wailing utterances he recorded to his sovereigns while in Jamaica? "Hitherto," he says, "I have wept over others; may Heaven now have mercy upon me, and may the earth weep for me. With regard to temporal things, I have not even a blanca for an offering; and in spiritual things, I have ceased here in the Indies from observing the prescribed forms of religion. Solitary in my trouble, sick, and in daily expectation of death, surrounded by millions of hostile savages full of cruelty, and thus separated from the blessed sacraments of our holy church, how will my soul be forgotten if it be separated from the body in this foreign land? Weep for me, whoever has charity, truth, and justice!"

But afflictions and trials did not deter the Admiral from present duty. The sick were so devotedly cared for that they soon became convalescent, and the Indians were so conciliated by kind treatment that they continued to bring provisions in exchange for trinkets and European commodities. "But they being a people that take little pains in sowing," says Fernando Columbus, "and we eating more in one day than they did in twenty, besides having no longer any inclination to our com-

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter cii.

modities and making little account of them, they began in some measure to take the advice of the mutineers, since they saw so great a part of our men against us, and therefore brought not such plenty of provisions as we stood in need of. This brought us to great distress ; for if we would have taken it by force, the greatest part of us must have gone ashore in warlike manner and have left the Admiral aboard in great danger, he being very ill of the gout ; and if we expected they should bring it of their own accord, we must live in misery, and give ten times as much for it as we did at first, they knowing how to make their bargains, as being sensible of the advantages they had over us."

But the Admiral was a great sailor even on dry land, and was about as expert in managing a community of savage chieftains as in controlling mutinous sailors. Even the most striking phenomena of nature must be utilized in directing human thought and action. In three days there would be an eclipse of the moon. An interpreter was sent out to summon all the principal Indians on the island, for he wished to talk with them concerning a matter of great importance. They arrived the day before the eclipse, and the interpreter was instructed to tell them that the God in whom these Christians believed "took care of the good and punished the wicked," hence those Spaniards who had rebelled had not been permitted to reach Hispaniola, as Mendez and Fiesco had, but had wandered about miserably, as all the islanders knew, and this great God was angry with the Indians because they neglected to bring the Christians food in exchange for their commodities.

Plague and famine would, therefore, come as a punishment upon the island, and, lest they should doubt this, there would be a sign given them in the heavens. That very night they would behold the moon "rise angry and of a bloody hue," in token of the judgments about to fall upon them.

The Indians went away, some of them more or less terrified, and some of them regarding the matter merely as an "idle tale." When the moon arose, the dark shadow began to advance upon her, increasing as she ascended. The Indians were on the lookout for it, and were so terrified that they came running in all directions, loaded down with provisions, "crying and lamenting," and beseeching the Admiral "by all means to intercede with God for them, that he might not make them feel the effects of his wrath, and promising for the future carefully to bring him all he wanted."¹

The Admiral promised to speak with God for them, and, to this end, shut himself up during the remainder of the eclipse, the Indians meanwhile keeping up their cries and entreaties for help. When the eclipse began to recede and the moon became bright he came out of his cabin, "saying he had prayed to God for them, and promised him in their names they would be good for the future and use the Christians well, bringing them provisions and other necessaries, and that therefore God forgave them, and as a token of it they should see the angriness and bloody color of the moon go off."²

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter ciii.

² *Ibid.*

While he was speaking the change mentioned took place; so the natives, overjoyed at the sight, continued to thank the Admiral and to praise God till the moon was quite restored to them. "From that time forward," says Fernando Columbus, "they always took care to provide all that was necessary, ever praising the God of the Christians, for they believed the eclipses they had seen at other times had denoted mischief to befall them; and being ignorant of the cause of them and that they happened at certain times, not believing it possible to know on earth what was to happen in the heavens, they certainly concluded the God of the Christians had revealed it to the Admiral."

Eight months had passed since Mendez and Fiesco had launched their canoes for Hispaniola, and yet no word of any kind had come back. The men still remaining with Columbus, especially those having recovered from their sickness, were becoming very impatient. Some thought that the above-named comrades had been lost at sea, others feared they had been killed by the Indians on landing at Hispaniola, while others conjectured that they might have fallen victims to the hardships they must have encountered along the south side of Hispaniola, in the hundred leagues of rough and mountainous coast washed by a strong westward current, before they could reach San Domingo. Their suspicions were still further increased by a report from the Indians of an upturned canoe which they had seen floating on the beach—one which the mutineers may have sent adrift for the very purpose of creating an alarm. Concluding,

therefore, that no relief would ever come to them, another mutiny, consisting mostly of those who had been too sick to get away on the former occasion, was about to break out, when fortunately one afternoon, near night, the novel sight of a sail in the distance brought a quietus.

The craft, sent out by Ovando, cast anchor near the stranded caravels, and the captain, Diego de Escobar, known as one of the most active coadjutors of Roland's rebellion and condemned to death by Columbus, but pardoned by Bobadilla, entered a boat and approached the wrecks. He came near enough to deliver a letter from Ovando, and also a cask of wine and some bacon; then, moving away quite a distance, he told Columbus that he had been sent by the governor to express his deep regrets at his misfortunes, that he unfortunately had no vessel large enough to bring away him and his crews, but that he hoped soon to accommodate him. The Admiral's affairs, too, at Hispaniola were being faithfully looked after. If he wished to send a letter to the governor, would he prepare it quickly, as he must return at once.

All this was truly an enigma. Columbus wrote hastily to Ovando in the most friendly manner, depicting his deplorable situation, the late rebellion, and his dependence upon the good offices of the governor; moreover, he especially commended Mendez and Fiesco to his favor, assuring him that they had set out on their perilous voyage simply as the messengers of his distressed condition. On receiving the letter, Escobar returned immediately to his craft and set sail in the gloom of the coming night.

As the disappointed crews watched the retreating sail, they were still more and more perplexed at the coolness and sudden departure of these messengers, who had not been allowed to intercommunicate with them. Columbus, reading their gloomy disappointment in their faces, assured them that he was satisfied with the message, and believed that relief would soon come. Did it seem strange to them that he had not returned with Escobar? He preferred to remain and share their lot till a ship large enough to take them all away might arrive. Hope revived, and the heart went out of the conspiracy.

But as Columbus reflected he found much ground for query in this strange and hasty call from one of his most malicious enemies. Since Mendez had performed his mission so faithfully and in so short a time, why had not this much at least been done before? And why now was the relief so scanty—barely enough to tantalize them? Was Ovando afraid to have him returned to Spain, lest he should be reinstated in his viceroyalty, and so displace him; or did he hope by this long delay to insure his death on this lonely island, among savages? Was the unfriendly Escobar merely a spy, sent out to ascertain something as to these possibilities? To this very hour impartial students of history have continued to ask these same questions, but no answer has ever suggested itself which does not imply the most culpable and shameful neglect of a noble and most serviceable man, whom the world still delights to honor.

Should we not believe Ovando guilty of some dark and sinister purpose, the fact still remains that he was at least unmindful of the keen sufferings incident to so

great a calamity, and that is still further aggravated in that he was at this very time, as it would appear, completely absorbed in the most shameless and cruel persecution of the natives. The exterminating wars, in which the aged, the infirm, and those in helpless infancy were alike subjected to the most indiscriminate slaughter; the manner in which captives were gibbeted, hacked in pieces, wrapped in dry straw and set on fire, or were sent away with their hands cut off, that the bleeding stumps of their arms might be a warning to those disposed to rebel against Spanish tyranny; how others were made to slave in the mines, long distances from their homes, for a mere pittance of pay which mocked the pangs of hunger; how many of the oppressed natives resorted to suicide as an escape from the most cruel outrages; how others died from exhaustion on their way home from the mines—all this and immeasurably more, even to the extermination of millions of the once happy aborigines of these elysian isles in a few decades, all is told by the saintly Las Casas, who was an eyewitness of the shocking scenes and spent his life in trying to alleviate the miseries of the poor unfortunates.

Such was the administration of Ovando, who had been sent to Hispaniola to correct the supposed misrule of Columbus, and especially in respect to his so-called cruel treatment of the natives. In no way does the government of the Admiral appear so favorable, particularly in respect to the natives, as when contrasted with the horrors of the rule of Bobadilla and Ovando, whose exterminating oppression of the Indian servants and slaves finds its explanation in their determination to gain favor

with the Spanish sovereigns by swelling their coffers with the much-coveted gold from the Indies. Indeed, the entire scheme of their management was a carefully studied and well-organized plan to this particular end, without any apparent regard for justice or human rights. Las Casas, whose detailed account of the cruelties of the Spaniards to the natives is so sickening as to be well-nigh unreadable, says, "All these things and others revolting to human nature my own eyes beheld; and now I almost fear to repeat them, scarce believing myself, or whether I have not dreamt them."¹

But to return to the Admiral on his worm-eaten ships, we find the whole aspect of things changed by Escobar's short and mysterious call. Hope had returned to every heart, and a vantage-ground had been gained for treating with the rebels, with whom, now that it was clear how safely and successfully Mendez and Fiesco had made their voyage and ultimately accomplished their purpose, and that the services of the Admiral would be acknowledged and he treated with favor at court, it was thought fit to make overtures. Two of the most noted men in the crews, therefore, were sent, carrying along with them some of the newly arrived bacon as proof positive that a ship had really arrived. The main item of the proposition was an offer of pardon to all, irrespective of the past, and free passage with the Admiral to Spain in the ships expected in case they would return at once to their allegiance.

Porras came out to meet the messengers, keeping his men back lest they should be moved by the propositions which might be made. But the ears of his men were

¹ Lib. ii., cap. 17, MS.

sharp; they readily caught the intelligence of the arrival of the caravel, the good health of those with the Admiral, and the overtures he was making. After several consultations on the part of the leading mutineers, it was resolved not to accept the Admiral's offers, nor to regard the general proffer of pardon he had sent. If two ships should arrive for his conveyance, and he would allow them one, they would go peaceably to Hispaniola. Should there be but one ship, he might assign them half of it. And since they had lost their clothing and commodities for trade in their ill-fated attempts to leave the island, he must share what he had with them. When the messengers pronounced these proposals unreasonable they had the audacity to say if these terms were not granted them "by fair means," they would take them "by force."

When Porrás and his associate leaders reported themselves to the rank and file of the mutineers they discovered that they were not sustained in their decision. A general amnesty! a free and honorable return to Spain!—these were items not to be thrown away as trifles. Besides, the magnitude of the prostrate, suffering Admiral rose before them in such proportions that they dared not continue obnoxious to his power. But the deceitful eloquence of Porrás rose equal to the emergency. It would not do to risk dissension in this hour of danger. They must beware of this bait, he insinuated, for the Admiral was naturally cruel and vindictive, and would make them smart when they came into his power. As for themselves—the Porrás brothers—they had influence at court, and therefore had nothing to fear. Had not

Roldan and his company rejected all Columbus's offers, and persisted in their rebellion, and yet came out to great advantage in the end, even sending the Admiral home in chains? As for that phantom ship just reported, it was a mere illusion of the twilight, conjured up by *art magic*, in which Columbus was known to be a great adept. If it had been a real caravel, why did not its crew communicate with those on the wrecks? Why did it stay so short a time? Why did not the Admiral, with his brother and son, embark on its homeward voyage? This harangue, so shrewdly put, had the desired effect. The men concluded to remain in rebellion, and, going at once with Porras to the ships, take by force what they wanted, and capture the Admiral.

The mutineers approached within about a mile of the ships, but Columbus was informed of them, and sent out Don Bartholomew with fifty men well armed. He was first to use "good words," but, if the offenders proved incorrigible, he was to be ready for the worst. He and his men took their stand on a little hill about a bow-shot from the rebels, and sent to them as messengers the same two men who had made overtures to them before. But Porras, whose force was quite as numerous as that of the *adelantado*, was in no mood for a peaceful conference. The rebels were all able seamen, well hardened by their outdoor strolling, while those with Don Bartholomew were weak through sickness and confinement on the wreck—indeed, were only gentlemen and pale-faced civilians—and would not dare to fight.

Deluded by these words, the rebels refused to listen

to any overtures for peace, but presenting a solid rank of swords and lances, cried, "Kill! kill!" Six of their strongest men resolved, under oath, to stand together in the attack till they had slain the adelantado. Of the rest they made no account. "But they were so well received," says Fernando Columbus, "that five or six of them dropped at the first charge, most of them being of those of them that aimed at the lieutenant, who fell upon his enemies in such manner that, in a very short time, Juan Sanchez, from whom Quibian made his escape, was killed, as was Juan Barber, the first I saw draw his sword when they ran into rebellion, and some others fell very much wounded, and Francisco de Porras, their captain, was taken. Seeing themselves so roughly handled, like base, rebellious people, they turned their backs and fled as fast as they could."

The adelantado, whose hand had been wounded by the sword which Francisco de Porras had thrust through his buckler, and who, with the aid of his comrades, had captured the rebel leader before he could extricate himself, wished to pursue the rebels still further; but his men dissuaded him, saying that punishment must not be carried too far. Besides, there was a body of the natives in arms near by, simply looking on, indeed, but they might be tempted to attack if they saw the Spaniards scattering in the pursuit of their own men.

The skirmish over, the Indians, led by curiosity, prowled around to examine the wounds which the fatal weapons of the white men had made in those of their own flesh, with some such feelings, probably, as men might look on a battle-field of the gods. "Peter

de Ledesma, that pilot we mentioned above," says Fernando Columbus, "who went with Vincent Yanez to Honduras, and swam ashore at Belen, fell down certain rocks, and lay hid that day and the next till the evening, nobody assisting him or knowing where he was except the Indians, who with amazement, not knowing how our swords would cut, with little sticks opened his wounds, one of which was in his head, and his brains were seen through it; another in his shoulder, so large that his arm hung as it were loose; and the calf of one leg almost cut off, so that it hung down to his ankle; and one foot, as if it had a slipper on it, being sliced from the heel to the toes. Notwithstanding all which desperate hurts, when the Indians disturbed him he would say, 'Let me alone, for if I get up,' etc.,¹ and they, at these words, would fly in great consternation. This being known aboard the ships, he was carried into a thatched house hard by, where the dampness and gnats were enough to have killed him. Here, instead of turpentine, they dressed his wounds with oil, and he had so many besides those already mentioned that the surgeon who dressed them swore that for the first eight days he still found out new ones, and yet at last he recovered, the gentleman of the chamber dying, in whom he apprehended no danger.² The next day, being the 20th of May, all those that had escaped sent a petition to the Admiral humbly begging he would be merciful to them, for they repented them of what was past, and were ready to submit themselves to him. The Admiral granted

¹ It is said that his voice was particularly deep and impressive.

² This man had only been wounded slightly in the hip.

their request, and passed a general pardon upon condition the captain should continue a prisoner as he was, that he might not raise another mutiny.”¹

After a year of weary waiting, the inmates of the ships stranded on this island of savages were overjoyed at the sight of two vessels making for the harbor. One of them had been hired and fitted out by the ever-faithful Mendez. Stimulated by this example, the other had been sent by Ovando, in command of the Admiral’s agent at San Domingo.

According to Las Casas, the flagrant delay of Ovando to send relief to Columbus in his sufferings had awakened such universal indignation that even the pulpits gave their voice against it. The governor was therefore pressed into the sending relief in this eleventh hour in order to escape the universal condemnation. The common sympathy of mankind must ever be with the suffering. In the case of Columbus, notwithstanding all the efforts to rob him of the proper acknowledgment of his merits, it could not fail to be seen how poorly the treatment he received compared with his incalculable services.

When Columbus and his crews left the miserable wrecks, on the 28th of June, 1504, their joy might be more readily imagined than expressed. On the whole, the impressions which had been made upon the generous-hearted natives must have been favorable, for Oviedo says they wept when the Spaniards left.

Since Mendez and Fiesco had reached Hispaniola in their canoes in four days, we might fancy a mere sail of a week at most for these ships bearing back the Ad-

¹ Fernando Columbus, chapter cvii.

miral to San Domingo ; but such was the opposition of winds and currents that only on the 15th of August did they reach that harbor. The aged shipwrecked mariner, a mere suffering wreck of humanity, was hailed with a universal sense of kindly favor. Says Irving, "What had been denied to his merits was granted to his misfortunes ; and even the envious, appeased by his present reverses, seemed to forgive him for having once been so triumphant." The governor and all the grandees of the place came to meet him, and he was treated with the utmost courtesy, as a guest of Ovando's house. But, with all this external cordiality, it was felt by Columbus and his friends that at heart Ovando was cool and suspicious. As an evidence of this, they saw Porras, a traitor-prisoner, on his way to Spain for trial, now set free. Indeed, the governor even talked of punishing those who had taken up arms against the mutineers in the Admiral's defence. Here at once arose a collision between the two officials, as to the proper jurisdiction over these Jamaica criminals. Ovando finally yielded the point and sent them to Spain for trial.

There was nothing here in Hispaniola which could yield Columbus any particular delectation. The island was wholly changed. The happy, kind-hearted natives, the smoke of whose camp-fires had once enlivened the forests, and whose canoes had been made to glide so cheerfully about the harbors, had been utterly broken in spirit and almost annihilated. Where was the cheerful service and the Christian civilization he had hoped would obtain among them ?

Just here it will be pertinent to glance at the govern-

ment of Ovando in respect to affairs in general and in respect to the natives in particular. It will be remembered that he had been sent out to repair the damaging effects of Columbus's administration. Let us see how this ruling knight of Alcantara, noted for his wisdom and his high moral qualities, compares with the Admiral, so universally spoken against. With the change of governors, a new impulse had been given to the affairs of the Indies. The old illusion as to inexhaustible treasures of wealth to be picked up in the new country revived, for no one seemed to suspect that the causes of disaster to the colony were to be found in the nature of things—in the fact that a crowd of adventurers, demoralized soldiers, and prison-convicts, expecting to appropriate the civilized wealth of the Indies, could not thrive in a wilderness, among savages—in a part of the world, indeed, which no one even suspected to exist. The one man who governed was supposed to be the wheel upon which the fortunes of all who emigrated would turn. The appointment of Ovando inspired a new confidence, and there was about the same scramble of adventurers for his magnificent fleet of thirty sail as there had been when Columbus started on his second voyage.

Las Casas, an eye-witness, gives a vivid description of affairs when these adventurers arrived in the new country. Scarcely had they stepped ashore when the roads to the gold-mines were thronged. Even the proud *hidalgo* was carrying his bag of biscuit and miner's tools, envying the lucky fellow who could make the journey on horseback, and thereby bring back the greater load of gold. Each one strove to be

the first in the mines of the mountains, where they expected to gather gold like fruit from the trees. How great was their surprise, on reaching the spot, to find that they must dig laboriously, and that it required an experienced eye to detect the veins of gold, which must be searched out with the utmost perseverance and patience; and that, after the most exhaustive efforts, they not infrequently failed to find the precious ore. And while many thus failed utterly, many others accomplished so little that they were soon obliged to look upon their efforts as exceedingly unprofitable; so that, in a short time, there straggled over the highways and byways a lot of miserable, disappointed wretches, who had consumed their provisions, worn themselves out with useless toil, and were now returning in utmost chagrin and disappointment over the tracks made outward in the highest anticipations of hope. San Domingo was thronged with moneyless, hopeless, forlorn wretches, ready to sink into the most squalid misery. Some there were who were compelled to sell even the clothes from their backs to save themselves from starvation; and while a few gained employment from the older settlers, such was the generally reduced condition of the colony that the greater number could find no occupation whatever, and, becoming the suppliants of public charity, were the victims alike of hunger and shame. This union of physical want and mental torture in an uncultivated country of tropical climate soon brought on burning fevers and wasting consumptions, and in an incredibly short time over one thousand inhabited the newly made grave-yards of San Domingo and vicinity.

No one thought of attributing this fearful mortality to a maladministration on the part of Ovando, as they no doubt would have done in the case of Columbus; on the other hand, his treatment of the Spaniards was considered wise and discreet. The same cannot be said, however, as to his management of the natives. To them he was simply a sure and swift destruction.

It will be remembered that Columbus, under the severe pressure of Roldan's rebellion, had granted *repartimientos* of the natives; that is, he had ordered the caciques to furnish certain numbers of their subjects as laborers for the different Spaniards, and the service thus rendered was to be accepted instead of the original tax in gold-dust, cotton, etc. Under a considerate and humane management, the system might have resulted well, teaching the natives regular methods of industry, and bringing them in contact with civilization and Christianity. Under Bobadilla the system had been abused to the utmost. When his indulgence of the self-willed and depraved Spaniards had placed them in a state of *riot run mad*, and therefore entirely beyond his control, the chief result was the unmitigated sufferings of the helpless natives. Did he teach that the sovereigns of Spain did not care to enrich themselves by means of the new country, and so sell the lands and estates of the crown at the lowest possible figure, and did he reserve only one-eleventh instead of one-third of the gold for the crown? With ordinary working of the mines this small proportion would have fallen to a mere nothing, and the natives must, therefore, be subjected to the highest possible pressure of labor and toil in order to swell the eleventh of the gold

to as much and even more than one-third of it used to be. Moreover, the immense tracts of land, almost given away, must be ameliorated, cultivated, and rendered productive of sugar-cane, cotton, and tropical fruits. In order to carry out the two departments of labor as thoroughly as possible, two Spaniards would unite their interests, one superintending the working of the mines, and the other taking charge of the cultivation of the land. Special attention was given to the accumulation of gold. "Make the most of your time," was Bobadilla's oft reiterated advice; "there is no telling how long it will last." The Spaniards were only too ready to carry out his advice to the full, and so mercilessly forced the Indians to their utmost capacity of labor that the eleventh part of the gold yielded a greater revenue than did one-third under Columbus.

The picture of the scenes which followed are portrayed in a startling manner by that most humane and faithful eye-witness, Las Casas. In his old age, many years after the events had transpired, he recalled them as in a painful reverie. The light vegetable and frugivorous diet of the natives and their easy, pleasure-taking style of life from time immemorial had fixed a characteristic weakness of constitution which positively incapacitated them for the hardships of slavery. In addition to the failure of strength incident to excessive labor was the enervating effects of the most atrocious punishments, inflicted for the slightest offences. Behold that wretched criminal just escaped from the galleys of Castile or from the bloody hands of the executioner by the special grace of the sovereigns! He puts on

all the airs of a grand cavalier, is attended by an immense train of servants, and keeps a whole harem of young girls. Nor is he satisfied with the common Indian girls, but seeks out women of birth and rank—sisters and daughters of chieftains, who, from time out of mind, had been regarded with the most sacred feelings of veneration. Now, trembling and in tears, they are forced to minister to the passions of the vilest felons, who, but for the discovery of a new world, would have long since been hanging on gibbets. Is this luxurious Spaniard about to travel? He will disdain the back of a horse or a mule, and stretch himself out daintily on a hammock or litter, to be borne gently on the shoulders of the Indians. Others, following along, must hold the leaves of some gigantic palm over his head to shield from the sun a face bronzed not many years since in the exposure of the galleys; others, still, wave before that face a great feather fan to ward off the inconvenience of a burning atmosphere. Las Casas could recall the sore and bleeding shoulders of the Indians who had thus carried their tyrannical masters through long journeys.

When one of these newly made specimens of gentility reaches an Indian village, he seizes the stores of provisions in the most wasteful and wanton manner, and having been well feasted, orders the cacique and his subjects to dance and sing for his amusement. If he speaks to them, it is in the most haughty language, and the slightest sign of resentment or the least offence whatever brings down the lash or the cudgel, possibly even to the death of the offender. If any of the better class of Spaniards took exception to

such vile despotism, they might appeal in vain to the far more numerous class of bad people recently liberated from their penal life in Spain, or, sending distressing accounts to Spain on the other side of the globe, wait for a possible but slow and imperfect redress.

The fabulous quantities of gold amassed by Bobadilla did not close the eyes of the Spanish sovereigns to the atrocity of his methods, and when it was resolved that Ovando should succeed him every precaution was taken to remedy the evils brought about by his administration. Many and salutary in themselves were the new regulations made by the sovereigns. Among others, it was resolved that the natives, who had suffered so severely under the oppressions of Bobadilla, should be free. But under this new *régime* they refused to labor in the mines.

Ovando at once reported to the sovereigns the evils of this state of things, saying that tribute could not be collected, nor vice repressed, nor any regular industry be secured among the lazy and improvident Indians, unless they were compelled to work; nor could they be brought under the influence of Christianity while in a state of freedom, for they then kept entirely aloof from the Spaniards. On the strength of these suggestions new regulations were made. The sovereigns wrote to Ovando, saying that he should exact moderate labor from the natives; but authority must be enforced in the most kindly manner, the laborers must be paid regularly and fairly, and must be instructed in religion on certain days of the week.

This was enough. Ovando made the uttermost of these instructions in distributing the Indians as laborers

among the Spaniards. Requisitions were made on the different caciques for regular appointments of their subjects to each Castilian, according to his supposed needs. These laborers were to be paid, and instructed in the Catholic faith; but the pay was a mere apology for wages, and the instruction was limited in most cases to a few drops of water administered in baptism. The term of labor was at first limited to six months, but was soon increased to eight months, and before long the whole system became more intolerably cruel than were the worst days of the former administration. Often set to work at a distance of several days' journey from their families, and confined to the unsubstantial cassava-bread, with a mere scrap of pork occasionally to each, they were forced, under the lash, to the utmost capacity of their ability to toil. See those Spaniards who superintend the mines taking their dinner! The famished Indians scramble under the table like dogs for any bone that may be dropped. See how they gnaw and suck it, and then pounding it between stones, mix it with their cassava-bread! But the miners are more fortunate than those toiling in the fields, for they never taste "flesh or fish," but are obliged to keep up on a little cassava-bread and a few roots. And these poorly-fed Indians, all unused to work, were compelled to a degree of exertion sufficient to break down the strongest well-fed man. Do any of these poor mortals, fainting under a scorching sun, flee from this excessive toil and these severe lashes, and seek refuge in the mountains? They are hunted with bloodhounds like wild beasts, are scourged like slaves of the barbarous ages, and loaded down with chains to prevent a second

escape. Many dropped and died in the fields and in the mines. Others, who survived their six or eight months of labor, were so far from their homes—forty, sixty, or eighty leagues—with only a little cassava-bread, a few roots, or a few agi peppers to support life by the way, that their frail constitutions gave out, and they sank down and died. “I have found many dead in the road,” says the good Las Casas; “others were gasping under the trees, and others in the pangs of death faintly cried, ‘Hunger! hunger!’” Did any reach their homes? In most cases, during the long and weary months, the wives and children had wandered away or perished. The little hovel or wigwam called home, with its rude garden possibly, was overgrown with weeds, and the poor exhausted wretch crept up to his door, only to lie down and die in despair. Under these intolerable hardships the weakly race was fast passing away. In the wild delirium of despair many committed suicide; mothers destroyed their infants, that they might thus be spared a life so intolerably wretched. Though scarcely twelve years had passed since the discovery of Hispaniola, hundreds of thousands of the once happy natives had perished under the relentless hand of the licentious, avaricious white man. The shameful massacre at Xaragua and the sad fate of Anacaona under the direction of Ovando are related elsewhere. The war with Higuay and the ruthless destruction of the natives we must pass over with a mere mention.

There were originally five Indian sovereignties in Hispaniola. Four of these had already been subdued, and their caciques had come to a miserable end. The

downfall of the fifth invited the relentless hand of Ovando. The people of this kingdom of Higuay, which comprised the east end of the island, were in closer proximity to the Caribs than were the other kingdoms on the island, and had, consequently, been trained into a more warlike temper and habit. Their chieftain, Cotabanama, was a notable giant, measuring a yard from shoulder to shoulder, and being otherwise in good proportion. The natives of Higuay came into collision with the Spaniards as follows: Some Spaniards had wantonly set a dog on a cacique, who was thus shamefully mangled, and died in consequence soon after. Again and again the Higuayans had sought redress, but to no purpose. By and by they surprised a shallop carrying eight Spaniards near the island Saona, and slaughtered the crew as a retaliation. Now there was an uprising of the whole kingdom, and Ovando sent out Juan de Esquibel with four hundred men to quell the insurrection and administer suitable punishment for the massacre.

Cotabanama, having assembled his warriors, was ready for a stout resistance. Never did savages show a braver or more determined spirit. From time immemorial they had contended successfully against the cruel Caribs, and they would now test their arms and their valor to the utmost in resisting the encroachments of the detested white men. As the Spanish warriors ascended the beautiful and cultivated plateaus of this mountain region they were contested every step of the way in the most spirited manner; but the Spanish implements of war and their discipline in tactics proved, as usual, too much for naked savages. The Higuayan

forces were soon scattered, and sought refuge in the recesses of mountain rocks and in the thick forests. Women and children and the aged and infirm were hidden away in the darkest caves and deepest recesses of the mountains. When the Spaniards came upon them they slaughtered them in the most indiscriminate and cruel manner. The island of Saona was treated with special revenge. Some six or seven hundred natives, seeking refuge in one large enclosure, were all put to the sword without mercy. The few who escaped were made slaves, and the island was a desolation.

As no extent of bravery could enable these naked Indians to hold their own against the steel-clad warriors of Spain, they sued for peace, and were promised protection if they would cultivate a large tract of their beautiful table-lands in the mountains, and thus produce every year an immense quantity of bread. Cotabanama, the giant cacique, was so magnanimous in forgiving and forgetting the cruel wrongs suffered by him and his people that he joined in the most sacred friendship with Esquibel, even to the exchange of names with him as a symbol of a perpetual heart-union.

But the peace did not last long. About the time when Columbus was leaving the wreck at Jamaica a new revolt broke out among the Higuayans. The Spaniards had exceeded the bounds of their treaty in requiring the Indians not only to raise the grain stipulated, but to carry it on their backs to San Domingo. Then, too, after their usual manner, the Spaniards had outraged the sisters, daughters, and even the wives of the natives. There was a general rebellion. The Higuayans burnt a large wooden fortress built by the Spaniards, and put many of them to death.

Ovando gave orders to carry fire and sword into Higuay. The romantic heroism of the former war was re-enacted, and many were the incidents of the most impressive bravery. It is said that some of the wounded, into whose flesh the swift arrows from the cross-bows had sunk to the feather, drew them out, broke them with their teeth, and, hurling them at the Spaniards in helpless fury, fell dead in their tracks.

When any of the Indians were found they were subjected to the most excruciating tortures in order to force them into a betrayal of their concealed countrymen. When they found aged men, women, and helpless children hid away among the rocks and caves of the mountains they ran their swords through them, and hacked them in pieces in the most atrocious manner. One fearful battle ensued, lasting from two o'clock in the afternoon till night-fall, in which the poor naked Indians fought in defence of their country and their homes with extreme energy to the last. When their weak bows and slender arrows failed them they hurled showers of stones from their rocky heights, and were only the more infuriated at seeing the blood and the mangled corpses of their countrymen. They were completely routed, however, by the keen-edged steel and the gunpowder of the Spaniards. The next morning they were nowhere to be seen. The Spaniards, now breaking up into small parties, went in every direction, hunting them as if they had been wild beasts. They sought especially after the caciques, particularly Cotabanama. The Indians kept up their retreat with great caution, a whole line of twenty or more treading in the same tracks, leaving a footprint

like that of a single man, and scarcely displacing a branch or leaf of the forest.

But the Spaniards had become exceedingly sharp in trailing out their victims. The displacing of a few withered leaves would give them the clew, even amidst the confusing tracks of animals. With the keen nose of a hound, they could scent from afar the smoke of Indian fires. Not only did they continue to torture the straying victims of their search, and massacre *en masse* the multitudes of the helpless taking refuge secretly in the mountains, but to inspire the most overwhelming terror they would cut off the hands of such as they found roaming at large, and send them as a warning, to intimidate their friends into a surrender. "Numberless were those," says Las Casas, "whose hands were cut off in this manner, and many of them fainted and died by the way, from pain and loss of blood." The cruel, persecuting white men became ingenious in the invention of new and unheard-of cruelties. Behold that row of miserable victims on a long line of gibbets, so low down that the feet of the sufferers dangle on the ground, in order that death might be as lingering as possible! There is even a blasphemous play upon a sacred number in history, and thirteen are hung together, in honor of Christ and his twelve apostles. Not content with seeing their tortured victims struggle in the air, the soldiers test the strength and execution of their swords by hacking and hewing them in pieces. Some they wrap in dry straw, which they set on fire, terminating life in the most intense agony. The caciques were broiled to death on gridirons over slow fires, and when their groans and cries annoyed the

Spanish officers their mouths were crammed with chips in order to gag them. "All these things, and others revolting to human nature, my own eyes beheld," says Las Casas, who in old age recalled these shocking scenes of his youth, saying, "and now I almost fear to repeat them, scarcely believing my own recollections, and wondering if I have not dreamt them."

But the capture of Cotabanama was the great desideratum with Esquibel. Without it, Higuay would never completely surrender. The chieftain, with his wife and children, had taken refuge in a cave in the midst of a labyrinth of rocky forest, in the centre of the island Saona. Esquibel, with some fifty men, embarked in a caravel at night, and, sailing along the shadowy side of the island, landed his men on an obscure part of the coast at the dawn of day, before Cotabanama's spies had taken their stations. Presently two of these spies were brought to Esquibel, who soon drew out of them the fact that the chief was in the island. He thrust a poniard through one of these unfortunates in order to inspire terror in the other, whom he bound and compelled to act as a guide.

Evidently the cacique was not far away, so every Spaniard was on the alert to be his captor. They soon discovered a point at which the main path forked. Only Juan Lopez took the path to the left. With a bravery and an intuition on the track of the savage peculiar to himself, he threaded his way around hills so dense with thicket and forest that he could scarce see half a bow-shot ahead. Entering a gorge among the rocks, where the excess of vegetation and the deep cut in the mountain almost shut out the light, he found himself

face to face with some dozen Indian warriors, in single file. How easily they might have pierced this solitary enemy with their arrows; but they were petrified with surprise, having depended on their spies to guard the island, and now all suddenly suspecting a host of white men to be just at hand. Lopez understood human nature, and followed up this first surprise by boldly advancing and calling for Cotabanama. Tremblingly they replied that he was just behind them, and let him pass on to the rear. The giant cacique grasped his bow; but before he could draw the string Lopez had struck him with his sword, and the Indians about him had fled in a panic. Terrified at the blood gushing from his wound, Cotabanama cried out, "I am Juan de Esquibel," thinking his former change of names might be a guarantee of safety. Instantly Lopez seized him by the long hair of his head with his left hand, and with his right hand was about to plunge his sword into his body, but the cacique warded off the thrust with his huge arm, and clinching the Spaniard, hurled him to the ground. The struggle was long and fierce between these two powerful athletes; and the bleeding cacique, being on top of his adversary, was not only likely to crush him with his great weight, but was just grasping him by the throat to strangle him, when the Spaniards on the other path, being attracted by the noise, came to the rescue of Lopez. The poor cacique, giant though he was, could avail nothing against so many. In the large cavern near by, from which the cacique's wife and children had already fled, they found a huge chain which some Indian prisoners, once bound with it, had carried away.

With this they secured the cacique's immense hands, and led him, all bleeding, to a village near by. In the village square the Spaniards arranged trunks of trees like a huge gridiron, on which they proposed to broil the giant; but on a second thought they concluded to make a greater exhibition of their trophy, and so sent him on board a caravel, in chains, to San Domingo. Here he was a curiosity, and as he was paraded along the streets the crowds thronged him from every direction, gazing on this huge blood-stained image of despair, already become the mere shadow of himself. In these more humane days, so grand a specimen of the human race, guilty of no greater crime than an heroic defence of his outraged country, would be entitled to some kindly, or even *magnanimous*, treatment; but Ovando simply adjudged him to the fate of the vilest criminal, and hanged him ignominiously on the public square.

Thus ended the struggle of the last native chieftain against the cruel encroachments of the white man. The mere remnant—perhaps one-sixth—of the once numerous and happy population of the island now succumbed to the hardships and sufferings incident to the conquests of the steel-clad foreigners, and, broken alike in spirit and in that physical endurance which is born of hope, they gradually disappeared.

Such was the unhappy Hayti to which Columbus returned near the middle of August, 1504, from his long and trying confinement on the Jamaica wrecks. Ovando received him with formal politeness and an affected cordiality; but his inclination to let the Porrás rebels go free, and to dispute the jurisdiction of the

Admiral over his men even in his trying situation on the lonely island of Jamaica, soon caused the latter to feel ill at home, and induced a return to Spain as soon possible.

Notwithstanding the efforts of the ever-faithful Carvajal as agent, the financial resources of Columbus were sadly demoralized at San Domingo. For this Ovando would seem to be the subject of just blame. The Admiral collected what funds he could, repaired the ship in which he had sailed from Jamaica, and put her in the command of the adelantado for the conveyance of those who wished to return with him to Spain, many of the companions of his late voyage preferring to remain in Hispaniola. As these latter were in poverty and rags almost to nakedness, he made for them what provision he could out of his slender purse, wholly regardless of their recent unkindness to him. Chartering another vessel for the convenience of himself, his son, and his more intimate and faithful friends, the little squadron sailed September 12, 1504. They were barely out at sea, when a gale carried away the mast of the Admiral's caravel, and she was obliged to consign her crew and passengers to the other vessel and put back to San Domingo. The solitary craft now sailed on with fine weather for over a month, when, October 18th, a severe storm burst upon her. Then, after a short calm, a tempestuous whirlwind splintered the mainmast into four pieces, and it required all the adelantado's resources, along with the counsel of the sick Admiral stretched helplessly on his couch, to raise the yard, and tying planks on all sides of it, thus extemporize a mast. A few days later

still another storm sprung the foremast, and in this crippled and toggled-up plight they entered the port of San Lucas on the 7th of November. We shall now see what rest and comfort awaited the tempest-tossed Admiral, aged, infirm, and racked with pain.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE LAST VOYAGE.



FROM San Lucas, Columbus was borne to Seville, where he remained till May of the following year. He had hoped to go immediately to court, there to present his claims for his heavy financial arrears which had reduced him to positive want, and for the restoration of his privileges so ruthlessly taken from him; but his intense physical sufferings, aggravated by the most severe winter in Spain within the memory of man, made the plan impracticable.

Financial embarrassment is hard enough at any time, and has done much to break down many a stout-hearted man; but when it comes in old age and infirmity, aye, even in exhaustive illness, and is the result of the most flagrant injustice, its trials can scarcely be estimated. Columbus states in the most solemn manner, in a letter to his son, that his annual income at this time should not have been less than 10,000,000 maravedis. Without attempting any estimate, it is self-evident that it should at least have been a sufficient competency. Having appropriated all he could collect at San Domingo for the comfort of his crews and for the homeward voyage, he was obliged to live on borrowed money as soon as he reached Spain, and to live in the most frugal manner.

While the weary months of suffering dragged by, his chief occupation was the writing of letters, as he

lay almost helpless on his couch, and for this he was physically so incapacitated that the stiffness and pain in his hands would allow him the use of his pen only at night. He wrote to Diego de Deza, his old, trusty friend, now high in ecclesiastical honors; to Morales, the King's treasurer; to the council of the famous *Casa de Contratacion*, instituted during his last voyage; he wrote indirectly to the Bank of St. George in Genoa, through his trusty friend Oderigo; to Gorrício, to the Pope, and to the King; but most of his letters were to his son Diego. They alone would make a fair-sized book. He wrote not only concerning his own personal matters, but in behalf of the deplorable state of affairs in the Indies, concerning the needy, ragged, and almost starving men who had sailed with him in his last voyage, and who were now beseeching the officers of the crown in vain for their pay, and he gave an almost endless category of good advice to Diego, his son.

About this time he had become so thoroughly convinced of the fact that he could elicit no reply by means of his letters that he determined to be carried to the court, even at the risk of his life. He applied to the canons of Seville for the new mortuary litter, which had recently been used to carry Cardinal Mendoza to his grave. He might have it, they said, if Pinedo, treasurer of the navy, would be security for its return in good condition! High appreciation there was in those days for the man who had staked all on the discovery of a new world. The litter was secured, but his health was so precarious and the weather so cold that his friends dissuaded him from an undertaking so perilous to the life of one in his condition.

November 26, 1504, Isabella, worn out with disease contracted during the Moorish war, and overwhelmed by a series of the severest family afflictions, passed away. This was a most crushing bereavement to Columbus—the finishing stroke in the long series of his calamities. No doubt he comprehended his situation.

His failure to be carried to court, and the sad intelligence of the death of the Queen, induced him to send his brother Bartholomew, his son Fernando, and Carvajal to plead his cause with the King before his enemies could have time to prejudice the royal mind and so secure a final determination of affairs against him.

The bitterly severe winter had passed away, and the balmy days of spring so cheered the invalid that he determined to be carried to the court, then at Segovia. He arrived in May, well-nigh exhausted. Where are now the fawning courtiers who a few years ago, at Barcelona, would have waited for hours to touch his hand? Ah, they are still here, but they worship the rising, not the setting sun!

And the King! He smiles—on the surface—without enthusiasm, or even warmth. He listens to the recital of this perilous fourth voyage, but has very little to say. Nor is he at all moved by the portrayal of the golden wealth of Veragua, or the detailed account of the cruel rebellion of Porras and his associates. Now Columbus becomes fully conscious of the wintry coldness of that court without the presence and influence of Isabella.

A few days later Columbus *wrote* to the King, presenting his grave claims respectfully, but most ear-

nestly. The reply was characteristic of Ferdinand's wily treacherousness. He knew how much Spain owed to Columbus; but—but, there was so much implied in his claim—titles, governments, rights, accounts, indemnifications, and how many other points!—it would be necessary to submit the matter to the judgment of some very prudent and competent person. Who should this arbitrator be but Father Deza? asked Columbus. Was he not a favorite of the King, and also *his* friend? But in this arbitration the Admiral will have it explicitly understood that he submits only his rights and revenues, not his titles and prerogatives; these had been fixed by royal decree, and confirmed—how many times? Nothing more is known about the arbitration. The points to be submitted by the Admiral did not suit the King. Again and again the claims were pressed, and as often did the King smile, and acknowledge, and compliment, and promise to look into the matter; “but as to doing anything,” says Las Casas, “not only did he show Columbus no tokens of favor, but, on the other hand, placed every obstacle in his way, and at the same time was never remiss in complimentary expressions.”

The aged, suffering Admiral is disheartened with pleading his rights on the grounds of justice; he will leave all to the King's sense of fairness—his generosity, if you please. He will accept just what the King chooses to give him, regardless of the facts and figures in the case; only he begs that the matter may be attended to promptly, that he may retire to some quiet corner for rest. Now Ferdinand waxes eloquent in acknowledgments. He knows but too well that he

owes the Indies to Columbus, and he would not deprive him of the just dues for his services. He will not only bestow upon him the rightful revenues coming to him, he will do more—will even compensate him out of the estates of the crown.

What more than this could any one ask? What more can the Admiral say, after so out-and-out a promise? What can he do but be carried around after the court on a litter, simply waiting for the fulfilment? For months he follows and waits, but gets nothing beyond “fine words” and “great regards.” Finally the matter is referred to the tribunal of the dead Queen, and they know the mind of the King so well that they can simply hesitate and demur. “If Ferdinand could have done so with a quiet conscience and without disgracing his name, he would have utterly disregarded every privilege which he and the Queen had granted the Admiral, and which had been so justly merited.” So thought Las Casas and others of his time.

It is true, the outlook had immeasurably changed since the granting of the privileges of Columbus. Then, through a narrow loophole, the largest faith and the most intense enthusiasm might anticipate uncertain islands, and possibly pieces of continents. Now there were islands and continents, the richest and grandest—no one might conjecture to what extent; at any rate, Spain was a mere patch compared with them. Would it be wise to relegate such incalculable territories to a foreigner and his descendants forever? This surely was too much for a penurious, ambitious soul like that of Ferdinand to give away. In this case, at least, it was no mere matter of keeping one’s

word, like him "who sweareth to his own hurt and changeth not." But O heavens, and O earth! could not *something* have been done? Must this greatest benefactor of Spain and of the world—this begetter of a new era in the world's history—drag out his days a mere mendicant on a litter, and die a pauper? Can the King of Spain do nothing whatever to save himself from the foulest perjury and the blackest ingratitude?

This anxious waiting and sore disappointment were telling heavily on the suffering Admiral. Helpless and hopeless, he sank upon a sick-bed at Valladolid. "It is a matter that concerns my honor," he wrote to the King; "your Majesty may do as you think proper with all the rest; give or take, as may appear for your advantage, and I shall be satisfied. I believe that the worry caused by the delay of my suit is the main cause of my ill-health."

Columbus finally gave up his own personal claims, and simply interceded with the King, along with his son, for the rights of the family. "The more they appealed to him the more favorably he replied," says Las Casas, "but he always continued his system of putting them off, in the hope of tiring out their patience, and making them renounce their privileges and accept titles and estates in Castile in compensation for them." In fact, some such offer was made, but Columbus was never a man to be bought off from his clearly conceived or explicitly stipulated rights. "I have done all that I can do," he wrote pitifully to Deza; "I leave the rest to God. He has always sustained me in extremities."

During the last winter of the Admiral's life Ferdinand issued the following decree :

“The King: As I am informed that you, Chris. Colon, the Admiral, are in poor bodily health, owing to certain diseases which you have had or have, and that you cannot ride on horseback without great injury to your health; therefore, conceding this to your advanced age, I, by these presents, grant you license to ride on a mule, saddled and bridled, through whatever parts of these kingdoms or realms you wish and choose, notwithstanding the law which I issued in regard thereto; and command the justices of all parts of these kingdoms and realms not to offer you any impediment, or allow any to be offered to you, under penalty of ten thousand maravedis in behalf of the treasury on whoever does the contrary.

“Given in the city of Toro, Feb. 23rd, 1505.”

This enactment is at once an indication of the infirm condition of Columbus and of the peculiarly tyrannical laws of the time, which, finding horses too scarce in Spain for the emergencies of war, had laid restrictions on the domestic uses of the mule, hoping thereby to increase the number of horses.

During the very last days of the Admiral there was a gleam of hope. The Infanta Juana, with her husband, the Archduke Philip, had arrived from Flanders to take possession of the kingdom of Castile. Might there not be found in the daughter some likeness to the great soul of her mother? When the King and all the court went to Laredo to meet the new Queen, Columbus was unable to gratify his heart's strongest wish to accompany them, for a violent relapse had

laid him lower than ever. His brother Bartholomew was sent to represent him, with a letter of regret from him at not being able to congratulate the new sovereigns in person, and asking to be counted among their most faithful subjects. Though now in such great suffering, he still cherished the hope of rendering them some signal service. Moreover, he hoped by them to be restored to his honors and estates, which had been so unfairly taken from him.

On the 7th of May the sovereigns arrived, and in a few days received Don Bartholomew with great kindness. The claims of the Admiral were well considered, and once more fair promises were made. But the adelantado had scarcely left him when it became evident that he was nearing his end—was about to make his last voyage. He accordingly addressed himself to the last duties of life. The codicil to his will, found in 1779, and dated May 4, 1506, written on the blank page of a breviary given to him by Pope Alexander VI, a great comfort to him in battles, captivities, and misfortunes, is probably apocryphal.

May 19th he ratified his will, formally drawn up in his own hand some time before. Diego was made his heir. If he failed of heirship, the estate was to vest in Fernando, who, in default of heirs, should be succeeded by the adelantado. If these all failed of male descendants, the inheritance was to pass to the female line in similar succession. He had continued loyal to the Spanish sovereigns through all the wrongs he had suffered, and now he enjoined upon his descendants the utmost fidelity. They must relieve all distressed relatives and others in poverty. Some one of

his lineage must represent the family in Genoa. Diego must have special regard for the needs of his brother and uncle. When the resources of the estate would admit, he must erect a chapel in the Vega Real of Hispaniola, where masses may be maintained for his repose and that of the souls of other members of the family. The crusade for the recovery of the Holy Sepulchre was also remembered, and Dona Beatrix Enríquez. It will be seen at once that this is, to all intents and purposes, the will of 1496.

After signing the codicil of his will, duly witnessed, he showed his fine sense of gratitude by noting in his own hand small sums which his heirs were to pay to the various persons who, at different times in his life, had rendered him small services.

Having thus fulfilled the final duties of this life, he sought the consolations of religion. With the calmness and resignation of hope, he awaited the great transition from this world to the unknown. His last words were those of Christ on the cross—"Into thy hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit." Thus ended the most eventful life this side of the Christian era, May 20, 1506.

The commonly received opinion, that the Admiral was first entombed in the Franciscan convent in Valladolid, may be regarded as probable, but is without any certain evidence; and according to the will of his son Diego, 1509, it would seem that his father's remains had already been deposited in the vault of the Carthusians in the Las Cuevas convent of Seville. It seems to have been the conviction of the Columbus family that the Admiral had a preference for Hayti as

his final resting-place, and his remains were removed there, probably, about 1541, soon after the completion of the cathedral. As early, however, as 1536, the records of the convent show them to have been given up for transportation, though it is only on June 2, 1537, that the first royal order was given for their removal. Strange to say, that order was repeated on the 22^d of August, 1539, and again on the 5th of November, 1540. As to where the remains could have been from 1536 till 1541, or after, we have no information.

There is no record, made at the time, to show the exact placing of the body of Columbus in the San Domingo cathedral. In 1676 some one recorded that it had been deposited on the right of the altar; and in 1683 the recollections of aged people were quoted to that effect. About a century later, when certain repairs were being made, a vault was found on the "gospel" or left side of the chancel, traditionally held to contain the remains of the Admiral, while another was found on the "epistle" or right side, supposed to contain those of his brother Bartholomew.

In 1795, when the treaty of Basle gave the San Domingo half of the island to the French, the Spanish authorities, along with the Duke of Veragua as the lineal descendant of Columbus, concluded to remove the remains to Havana; and the vault on the left hand or "gospel" side was opened, according to the above tradition, but contrary to the first known record. "Within were found the fragments of a leaden coffin, a number of bones, and a quantity of mould, evidently the remains of a human body. These were carefully col-

lected and put in a case of gilded lead, about half an ell in length and breadth, and a third in height."¹ With indescribable pomp and ceremony, the remains were conveyed to Havana. It is now claimed, however, that these remains were not those of the Admiral, but of Diego, his son.

"In 1877, in making some changes about the chancel, on the right of the altar, the workmen opened a vault, and found a leaden case containing human bones, with an inscription showing them to be those of Luis, the grandson. This led to a search on the opposite or 'gospel side' of the chancel, where they found an empty vault, supposed to be the one from which the remains were taken to Havana. Between this and the side wall of the building, and separated from the empty vault by a six-inch wall, was found another cavity, and in it a leaden case. There seem to have been suitable precautions taken to avoid occasion for imputations of deceit, and with witnesses the case was examined. In it were found some bones and dust, a leaden bullet, two iron screws, which fitted the holes in a small silver plate found beneath the mould in the bottom of the case. This casket bore on the outside, on the front and two ends—one letter on each surface—the letters C. C. A."² An inscription on the top is supposed to mean "Discoverer of America, first Admiral." On the under side of the lid was a legend, translated, "Illustrious and renowned man, Christopher Columbus." An inscription on the silver plate is rendered, "A part of the remains of the first Admiral, Don Christopher Columbus, discoverer."

¹ Irving's *Life and Voyages of Columbus*.

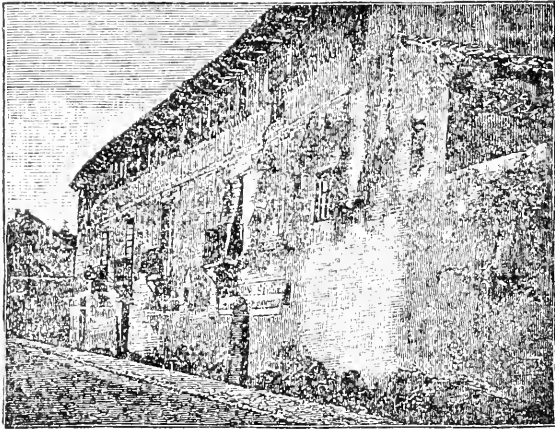
² *Narrative and Critical History of America*, vol. 2, p. 81.

A discussion followed, which it would be useless to attempt to describe within our limits. The Spaniards are well convinced that they have the remains of the famous Admiral in Havana, but a careful examination of the disclosures of 1877, at the Cathedral of San Domingo, can leave but little doubt as to the remains of the great Admiral being still there. Indeed, the last shadow of doubt would seem to be removed by the painstaking investigations made by that famous German explorer, Cronau, at San Domingo in 1890. He believes the much-debated inscriptions on the casket in question to have been cut in the sixteenth century, and is conclusive in his conviction that the remains of Columbus are still at San Domingo. The corroded musket-ball found in the casket, he regards as a marked evidence of identity in respect to the remains. We have no account, indeed, of the Admiral being wounded, but in a letter from Jamaica to the sovereigns he speaks of his wound breaking out afresh. On the whole it would seem that as in Columbus's lifetime the Spaniards had tried to get rid of him and his claims without accomplishing their aim, so now, after trying in the most signal manner to retain the prestige of the last and least remains of his dead body, they have probably incurred an equally ignominious failure.

It is well known that the chains in which Columbus was sent to Spain by Bobadilla he kept as a memorial of his wrongs, and intended they should go with him into his coffin; but as no such chains, not even in the form of oxide of iron, have been in any of the supposed caskets, may it not be that his veritable remains are

yet to be identified? But wherever the spot may be, of which in respect to the great Admiral we may say, "Dust to dust, and ashes to ashes," the New World—that is, one-half the globe—is his monument.

Summing up the question of the possession of the remains of Columbus, we feel at liberty to disclose, at this time and in this place, two facts which may anticipate and conclude future action in the premises. We have been informed by controlling if not



THE HOUSE IN WHICH COLUMBUS DIED.

actually official parties in the management of the Columbian Exposition at Chicago that only a proper and legitimate appropriation of sufficient funds was needed to accomplish the transfer of the alleged remains of Columbus from San Domingo to Chicago. We have also had assurance of the significant fact that the chains which Columbus's son describes in his memoirs of his father, and which he says were kept

hanging in his bed-chamber, are still preserved and said to be, if we are not mistaken, in the hands of a party in Genoa, from whom they can be obtained upon like conditions as the muniments and alleged remains from San Domingo. If these are to be forthcoming, they will probably be added to the copious body of relics to be exhibited in the replica of the Convent of La Rabida, now in course of construction on the shores of Lake Michigan, during the present celebration.

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